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9 May 1996

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Daily Report
Near East & South Asia

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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Security Reportedly Foils Israeli Attempt To Kill Qaddumi

JN0805174996 Abu Dhabi AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 5 May 96 pp 1, 29

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] AL-ITTIHAD learned from well-informed Palestinian sources in Cairo that Palestinian security agencies foiled an Israeli plan to assassinate Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department and leader of Palestinian opposition to the Oslo agreements.

The sources said that Israeli intelligence recruited two Palestinians who hold Israeli citizenship to carry out this operation. They were provided with Yemeni passports to travel to Cairo or Tunisia via Paris to assassinate Qaddumi. The sources added that Israeli intelligence, the Mosad, set two dates for the assassination. The first was in Cairo during the Arab foreign ministers meeting held last month to discuss the Israeli aggression against Lebanon. However, this was canceled for fear that the arrest of the two agents would cause a crisis in Egyptian-Israeli relations.

The sources added: Before the countdown to carrying out the operation in Tunisia, where Qaddumi usually stays, one of the agents was arrested by Palestinian security agents. He made a full confession about the plan. He said that the Mosad wanted to liquidate Qaddumi due to his frequent insults to Israeli leaders, particularly Rabin and Peres.

Palestinian Affairs: Sha'th Says Construction of Gaza Port Begins

JN0905072196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Nabil Sha'th, member of the Legislative Council, stated that work on the Gaza port has started. He indicated that a Netherlands digger arrived at the Gaza coast and that all the equipment that was held at Ben Gurion Airport and the Rafah crossing arrived in Gaza.

Palestinian Affairs: Safe Corridor To Be Inaugurated Within 1 Month

JN0905071596 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya, head of the Palestinian-Israeli Security Committee, expected the safe corridor between Palestinian governorates in the West Bank and Gaza Strip to be inaugurated within one month. In a statement to AL-AYYAM, al-Yahya added that the Palestinian and Israeli sides managed to resolve a number of controversial points on the safe corridor protocol and that they will hold two meetings within the next days to complete discussions on questions related to the corridor.

Maj. Gen. 'Abd-al-Razzaq al-Yahya stressed that the safe corridor will be in two directions. The first will be from Gaza to Tarqumiyah in Hebron and the second from Gaza to a point close to al-Latrun that will be specified later. He added that citizens will be able to use to safe corridor every day of the week by ordinary buses or their private vehicles without facing any obstacles. Meanwhile, the citizens banned from entering Israel will be allowed to use the corridor by special buses two days a week.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Leader Condemns U.S. Court Ruling on Abu-Marzuq

TA0905051196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] In New York, a federal judge has ruled that Israel has shown enough evidence against Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader Musa Muhammad Abu-Marzuq for a formal hearing on whether he can be extradited. [passage omitted]

In the Gaza Strip, a Hamas leader has condemned the court ruling, calling it a crime. Sayyid Abu-Musamih said it was aimed at helping Prime Minister Peres and U.S. President Clinton in their respective election campaigns.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Nashashibi—'Unlawful' To Extradite Abu-Marzuq

JN0905103196 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 0900 GMT 9 May 96

[Report by 'Adil al-Za'nun in Rafah]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestinian Legislative Council resumed its meetings at the Rafah Public Library at 1030 today. Nahid al-Rayyis, deputy speaker of the Legislative Council, stated that the council will conclude its debates on the reports submitted by the specialized committees. He indicated that during its meeting yesterday, the Legislative Council concluded its debates on three reports. Finance Minister Muhammad Zuhdi al-Nashashibi stressed that President 'Arafat will announce the new cabinet at the Legislative Council today.

Meanwhile, al-Nashashibi stressed that it is unlawful to extradite Musa Abu-Marzuq to Israel. New York Federal Judge (Kevin Gadi) yesterday allowed the extradition of Abu-Marzuq, a Palestinian Hamas [Islamic

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Resistance Movement] official, to Israel. Al-Nashashibi said that this issue is being studied legally and that an appropriate decision will be made in this regard.

Marwan Kanafani, member of the Legislative Council, said that this decision will affect the peace process. Kanafani hoped that the logic of reason and peace will prevail in Palestinian-U.S. relations. He indicated that the National Authority views Abu-Marzuq as a Palestinian citizen and will provide protection for him.

Edward Abington, the U.S. consul general, who arrived in Rafah to attend the session, said that this decision was taken by a court of first instance and that Abu-Marzuq's attorney has the right to appeal. He said this will take a long time in the courts.

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Spokesman Warns of 'Unknown' al-Qassam Activists

MM0805153396 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 May 96 p 3

[Report by Mufid 'Awwad: "Ibrahim Ghawshah Tells AL-SHARQ AL- AWSAT: Palestinian Authority Arrested Known 'al-Qassam' Activists, but Israel Fears Secret Ones"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman — Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement "Hamas," has played down the effect of the measures being taken by the Palestinian Authority [PA] against Hamas elements and the fighters of its military wing, the 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Battalions [IQB], in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Ghawshah told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Amman that "everyone will discover how difficult it is to uproot Hamas and the resistance, despite the repression, arrests, and torture."

He added that "I agree with Muhammad Dahlan, official in charge of security in the Palestinian Authority, who said recently that he and his men have arrested, especially in the Gaza Strip, all the known elements of the IQB, Hamas' military wing. But I assure Dahlan and his superiors that there are IQB elements who are unknown to anyone and whom the Zionist enemy fears. Thus what Dahlan and his Authority have done or said as regards the arrest of the known IQB elements cannot be considered an achievement at the security level. Shim'on Peres and leaders of his regime continue to fear resistance operations against the Zionist occupation.

Ghawshah denied the statements made by a number of PA officials about schemes being prepared by Hamas to assassinate some figures or blow up some PA offices. He said that "it is mere fabrication by Palestinian security circles with a view to winning the people's sympathy for the Authority, especially as this sympathy has dried up completely as a result of the recent repressive policies pursued by the Authority against the Palestinian people's sons.

Ghawshah stressed that Hamas and its military wing "have never targeted anything other than the Zionist occupation." He pointed out that that "is not attributable to impotence or negligence, but, rather, religious and nationalist considerations, because the enemy of the Islamic resistance is the Zionist occupation."

The Hamas spokesman expressed his hope that the campaign staged by the Authority's organs would stop, warning of an explosion "if Hamas elements and leaders continue to be tortured.

Ghawshah said: "There is a real fear that young Muslims might no longer tolerate these abominable actions of torture, especially those committed against people like Dr. Ibrahim Muqadimah, whose ribs were broken and his body covered in blood clots under the skin, and Jamal al-Jarrah, whose arms were broken. This is in addition to the torture atrocities committed by some PA organs against the mujahidin of the Palestinian people. It is something which no Arab or Muslim had expected from the PA and its tool, the police. Ghawshah said that, had it not been for the sacrifices of the mujahidin from Hamas and the other factions, none of them would have reached the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

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Algeria

Algeria: Agreement With Libya Said Aimed at Pursuing Armed Groups

MM0805152596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 May 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Munsif al-Sulaymi: "Algerian-Libyan Agreement Aimed at Besieging Armed Groups"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Rabat, Tunis, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT — Muhammad Mahmud al-Hijazi, secretary of the Libyan General People's Committee for Justice and Public Security (interior minister), and Algerian Interior Minister Mustapha Benmansour signed the day before yesterday in Algeria a document on cooperation in the spheres of security, movement across the border, and development of the border areas. [passage omitted]

Libyan and Algerian officials have not revealed the content of the new agreement or the minutes of the meeting. However, informed sources have said that the agreement contains joint measures to pursue elements of the armed Islamic groups across the border desert area between the two countries. The roads used by the groups pass through what are known as the southern Saharan roads, situated in an open area in which arms sales and smuggling are widespread in north Mali and Niger.

The Algerian authorities' security plan has over recent months focused on pursuing the groups in the desert areas. Official Algerian sources have announced recently that hundreds of elements from the groups have been killed by Algerian security forces and the Army in mountainous and desert areas in the southern region of the country. [passage omitted]

Algeria: DPRK Minister on Talks With Zeroual

LD0805202996 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Liamine Zeroual received in the presidency this morning Kim Yong-nam, deputy prime minister and foreign minister of the DPRK. [passage omitted]

Immediately after the meeting, Mr. Kim Yong-nam gave the following statement:

[Begin Kim recording, in Korean with superimposed Arabic translation] My talks with the Algerian president were of great political importance. We talked with his excellency on issues connected with achieving unity and national solidarity in Algeria, the country's welfare, and guaranteeing independent economic development.

The president assured me that Algeria has embarked on the correct path in the sphere of national reform.

We also dealt with bilateral relations between Korea and Algeria in the meeting, and stressed the need to develop bilateral relations and strengthen cooperation in different areas between our two countries, particularly in the economic sphere. [end recording]

Algeria: Press Reports Police Kill Islamic Jihad Leader

LD0905105296 Paris Radio France International in French 1000 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] According to Algerian dailies, one of the leaders of the Islamic Front of the Armed Jihad was killed by the security forces last Monday [6 May].

Algeria: Local Mayor, Deputy Killed West of Algiers

LD0905094296 Paris France-Inter Radio Network in French 0800 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Every morning Algerians read their newspapers, they discover the names of those killed in attacks the previous day.

Today they read about the killing of the mayor of the town of Beni-Messous, west of Algiers, and his deputy. Boubakar Melik and Ahmed Tayeb were killed in the premises of the town hall by three armed men who managed to escape.

Egypt

Egypt: Jordan's al-Kabariti, Delegation Arrive Ahead of King

NC0805133196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)—Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti and his accompanying delegation arrived in Cairo on a short visit this afternoon.

Al-Kabariti will join the team accompanying King Husayn during his visit to Cairo [today].

Egypt: King Husayn, Queen Nur Arrive on Short Visit

NC0805140896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)—King Husayn of Jordan and Queen Nur arrived in Cairo this evening on a short visit during which he will hold talks with President Husni Mubarak.

President and Mrs. Mubarak were at the head of the reception committee at Cairo International Airport.

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Egypt: Mubarak, King Husayn Hold Closed Meeting

NC0805162796 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)— President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan held a closed meeting in the presidential office this evening.

The two leaders will give an international news conference at the conclusion of their talks.

Egypt: Musa Denies Reports on Tripartite Summit in Cairo

NC0805163096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1605 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)— Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa denied reports that Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat is going to join President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan in a tripartite summit meeting.

He said in a statement before the Egyptian-Jordanian talks opened in the presidential office this evening that the current summit will be exclusively Egypt and Jordan and that the two leaders will review all the issues in the Arab arena, in addition to the peace process.

Minister Musa was asked about reports that 'Arafat left Gaza and will arrive in Cairo tomorrow and that King Husayn will spend the night in Cairo to take part in a tripartite summit tomorrow. The foreign minister said that the Jordanian monarch will leave Cairo this evening, after his talks with President Mubarak.

President Husni Mubarak said a few days ago that a tripartite summit meeting between Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine is expected to be held in Cairo early next week.

Egypt: Mubarak, King Husayn Hold News Conference

NC0805184696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1745 GMT 8 May 96

[News conference by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and King Husayn of Jordan with unidentified reporters at the Presidential Palace in Heliopolis—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Mubarak] Once again I welcome his majesty King Husayn. There is no need to say much. Relations with Jordan and with his majesty are longstanding. We occasionally meet and discuss bilateral ties. The Egyptian prime minister and his delegation were in Amman yesterday to discuss bilateral relations. Today we discussed the situation in Iraq, the Palestinian issue, the peace process in the region, the future prospects, and increasing cooperation between our two countries. We also discussed Arab reconciliation. We continually discuss these issues as we did today. Once again, I welcome my brother his majesty the king and, though his visit is brief, God willing, we will meet again soon.

[Husayn] God willing, Your Excellency. I take this opportunity to express to my big and dear brother my thanks, appreciation, and gratitude for the warm hospitality and the opportunity to meet in Cairo again. His excellency the president described our ties as longstanding. I would like to add that the ties are longstanding and also steadily growing in the fullest sense of the word. As his excellency said, a bilateral meeting took place between the brothers in Amman. We are proceeding, God willing, to achieve all aspirations and hopes regarding our bilateral relations, which are based on trust and resolve that frankness will be our way to address any issue, whether it directly affects us or has to do with the region and the nation. We hope that our relations will always be based on mutual trust and respect. Egypt is our big brother and always in our heart. We pray to God to grant success to his excellency and our brothers here. We are with you and for you under all circumstances. God willing, our next meeting will take place in the next few days and we hope that our meetings will continue.

[Correspondent, in English with superimposed Arabic translation] Question for President Mubarak, this is Nihad Sa'd for Nile Television International, Egypt has complained to the EU troika delegation that visited Egypt recently of the U.S. and Europe's bias toward Israel. Do you believe that the United States will lose its credibility as an honest broker in the peace process? Do you believe that the United States will change its stance? Do you think that Europe will play a greater role in the peace process?

[Mubarak] I cannot say that the United States is not a fair partner. Circumstances are completely different now. There are elections here and there. We can say that the United States is an extremely important partner in the peace process. There are different circumstances about which we are not satisfied. However, we must contact our partners when problems arise. The EU is required because Europe is so close to the region, and so we cannot ignore EU efforts to find balance in all aspects.

[Correspondent] Although the Palestinian Authority took a giant step when it amended the national charter and omitted articles that urged the destruction of Israel, the Israeli side has not positively reciprocated this step. On the contrary, the redeployment of Israeli

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troops in Hebron was postponed and Israel continued to confiscate Arab lands in Jerusalem. Does this mean that the Palestinian-Israeli track and other tracks will continue to be subject to what Israeli voters says at the polling stations on 29 May?

[Mubarak] It should be clear to us that the Palestinian issue is old and complicated; it is 40 or 50 years old. It is not easy to solve, particularly since the settlements have grown. Had the Palestinian issue been resolved within the framework of Camp David, it would have been easier since there were a limited number of settlements in the West Bank and Gaza. But now settlements are numerous. It is the dismantling of these settlements which creates difficulties for both sides. But I believe and I trust that the Palestinian track will move ahead. There might be some delay now due to the elections and the oneupmanship in which all the parties are involved, but the agreements will continue after the elections because this is the only way to peace. There is no other way.

[Correspondent] There were reports in the past few days about a tripartite summit involving Egypt, Jordan, and Palestine. Will this summit be held, and if so, when and where?

I address this question to His Majesty King Husayn: Does Jordan support the Palestinians, in connection with Jerusalem, during the last phase of negotiations?

[Mubarak] We discussed the issue of a tripartite meeting. It might be held soon. But when and where I cannot say. We are still discussing it.

[Husayn] God willing the meeting will be held soon. If it is held, it will naturally be held in dear Egypt and hosted by Brother President Muhammad Husni Mubarak.

As for Jerusalem and the Palestinian issue as a whole, our position in Jordan is one of support and backing for our brothers until they regain their full rights to their national soil.

Jerusalem has a special place in our hearts. I believe that it should be the symbol of peace in the future, a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

[Correspondent] The question is for his majesty the king and his excellency the president. In light of the ceasefire understanding in Lebanon, do you believe that there is now common ground for resuming the peace march? What role can Jordan and Egypt play in helping the Lebanese Government impose its sovereignty on all its territory?

[Mubarak] We are behind Lebanon's independence and the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon, so that the Lebanese Government can exercise sovereignty on all its territories without interference by any party. We cannot hesitate to do all we can for Lebanon. I believe that my brother his majesty the king agrees with me on this. We support the Lebanese Government and we support Lebanon's independence and sovereignty on all its territories. We call for implementing resolution 425, which provides for the Israeli troops withdrawal from Lebanese territories.

[Correspondent] I have two questions for His Excellency President Mubarak and His Majesty King Husayn. President Mubarak, what impact will the military agreements Israel signed with Turkey and the United States have on the region and the peace process as a whole? My question to his majesty is: Can you shed light on your recent tour of Europe and the issues that were discussed?

[Husayn] As far as my recent tour of Europe is concerned, we are going along the same course his excellency has just mentioned. Our relations with Europe, both individual states and the European Union, are longstanding. These relations are very important. Europe has a major role in this region. It is a neighbor with many interests in this part of the world. We are interested in developing our relations with Europe and in consulting with it and discussing all important issues. Naturally, during all my visits and meetings we reviewed bilateral relations with the countries we visited. We also discussed the European dimension. We encouraged Europe to play a more effective role so that we can together shape the future we aspire for ourselves, for this region, and the coming generations. This is what happened in my recent visit. All the meetings were successful and the outcome was useful.

[Mubarak] Concerning the Israeli-Turkish agreements, any state is entitled to sign whatever agreements it wants. But if these agreements affect the region or neighbor states, we have to express our views on them. So far, the foreign minister was in Turkey and he talked with them on this matter. But the picture is not clear enough about the significance of that agreement for me to comment on it.

As for American-Israeli relations, this is well-known. They openly say that they support Israel, which is nothing new for us to discuss.

[Correspondent] This question is addressed to President Mubarak and His Majesty King Husayn. In view of the challenges the region may face in the future, do you encourage the setting up of Arab regional groupings similar to the Damascus Declaration and the Arab Maghreb Union or other groupings?

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[Husayn] We support Arabs getting together on the largest scale possible. We support integration among all the brothers. We believe that the axes and blocs have been proven to produce more negative than positive results. This is my view.

[Mubarak] I agree with his majesty in that Arab groupings must be under the Arab League umbrella. It is the motherland, the home of Arabs. Regional groupings have failed; they resolved neither disputes nor problems. Matters are complicated in the Maghreb Union and the Arab Cooperation Council. But we have to insist on the Arab League umbrella. It is the home of Arabs and we should not deviate from that. Any groupings must be under the League's umbrella.

[Correspondent] Here are two questions. The first is addressed to his majesty the Jordanian monarch. Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres is still emphasizing that Jerusalem will continue to be Israel's eternal capital. He is even insinuating that Arabs are divided over the issue of Jerusalem and ways of treating it. How does your majesty respond to this? This is the first question.

Next is a question for President Mubarak concerning the Arab summit. There is general anger in the Arab world after the recent Israeli attacks on south Lebanon. An Arab tripartite summit was held in December 1994. Can there be a tripartite or quadripartite Arab summit to absorb Arab anger and develop a will to emerge from this bottleneck? The medication might be bitter, but the future can be even more bitter.

[Husayn] As far as the issue of Jerusalem is concerned, I repeat that I am absolutely convinced that Jerusalem, as a holy city, can never be subjected to the domination of any side. It has to be above all that, so that it can be for all the faithful and the followers of all the heavenly religions. Their rights to it should be guaranteed. It should not be under the sovereignty of any state, not Israel or any other state. I am talking about the holy places.

But as far as Jerusalem as a city is concerned, so far the west part of it is a capital for Israel. The eastern part was occupied by Israel in 1967. We hope that someday we will reach a stage where Jerusalem is the capital of both sides. We hope it will be the symbol of agreement and peace between the Palestinians and Israelis, and accordingly, the Arab-Israeli peace. But the sacred nature of the holy places must be preserved and so should the rights of all concerned.

[Mubarak] If his majesty allows me, I will add another word about Jerusalem. There are Israeli elections now. The parties are outbidding each other. Therefore, we should expect these outbiddings and statements to continue. But, Jerusalem's fate is not decided by elections because it does not concern the Arab countries alone, but all the Islamic and Christians ones too. The issue is still to be decided. A statement was issued in the United States few days ago saying that its stand on Jerusalem is firm, that is, that it will be decided in the negotiations.

Regarding the Arab summit, I remember that we had an agreement to hold an Arab summit in Cairo in November 1990. There only remained one problem between Syria and Iraq, and we were on the verge of resolving it. But Iraq's invasion of Kuwait undermined the Arab summit, though we had an agreement to meet annually, like the African summit does. The Africans do not undermine these summits when they have differences, but when there are Arab differences then we undermine their own summits. The situation now requires a summit. We are working to hold one, albeit a limited one. But I do not believe that we can have a full summit. We are looking for a limited summit of leaders. If we can hold it, then God willing it will be a good one.

[Correspondent] Mr. President, during your visit to Sinai a few days ago, you stated that several parties are seeking to undermine the peace process. Can you explain what you meant by this and whether these parties are countries or organizations?

[Mubarak] No, please excuse me for not saying whether these are countries or organizations. These are forces working against the peace process, because peace is not in their interest.

[Correspondent] A question on the unfair U.S. stand on Arab issues in the region. Egypt declared this an issue two days ago, when it said that the U.S. stand in dealing with the Middle East problem is not fair. Has Egypt received U.S. clarifications that it could at least be somewhat neutral in the peace process, despite its support for Israel? What is his majesty's view of U.S. unfairness in dealing with the Middle East problem, specially as it is saying that it is friends with both sides? The second question concerns your excellency's possible meeting with Shim'on Peres, would the aim be having a dialogue to overcome the obstacles facing the Palestinian issue at this stage?

[Husayn] Regarding fairness in this world, the issue primarily concerns us at the Palestinian and Arab level. When we defend our causes well, I believe that fairness will be achieved. But our policies in the past were in most cases self-centered, leaving the way open for others to influence world public opinion in a way that benefited and served their interests. As to our relations with the United States, I believe that they are strong and have developed recently and there is a constant dialogue.

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I also believe that the Arab issue is more understood now than ever before. We will continue to do what we can, whether in the United States or elsewhere, to defend our right and the right of the coming generations on this Arab land and in the great Arab homeland.

[Mubarak] There are many issues in the world that are not treated fairly. As to the United States, there is a feeling that this is the case, but we are having constant contacts with them to explain and listen. This is the way of understanding between us and the United States.

As to the second question, there is no problem between us and Shim'on Peres other than that of Lebanon and the Palestinian issue. But contacts are continuing to proceed with the implementation of the agreements on the peace issue, which is Palestinian one.

[Mariam Sari from AP] You said you discussed the issue of Iraq. I would like to ask: What was the core of these talks and what is King Husayn's stand on the ongoing talks on oil for food?

[Husayn] Regarding this terrible stand, which has affected the Iraqi people and Iraq, it requires the exertion of all possible efforts to encourage an improvement in the Iraqi people's living conditions. The utmost attention must be given to this matter from outside and inside the country. We support Iraq's return to the Arab camp and its position among states. We want it to get out of this difficulty it is facing and from which it has suffered for a long time. The Iraqi people must gain all their rights as human beings inside their country. At the same time, I would like to add that we support Iraq's territorial integrity and its sovereignty over all its territories. Iraq should never be divided.

[Mubarak] What we need is to lift the Iraqi people's suffering. But, this can only come when Iraq implements the Security Council resolutions. Thank you.

Egypt: Mubarak, King Husayn, 'Arafat Tripartite Summit Set for 12 May

NC0805192296 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1840 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)—A tripartite summit to include President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will be held in Cairo on Sunday [12 May].

This was stated by Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif. He said that the date of the summit was agreed on during today's talks between President Mubarak and the Jordanian king.

Egypt: Musa Phones 'Arafat on Arrangements for Tripartite Summit

NC0805192396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1856 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, 8 May (MENA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat received a telephone call tonight from Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa.

A Palestinian spokesman said that the two officials discussed the arrangements for holding a summit between President Husni Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and President 'Arafat in Cairo in the coming few days.

Egypt: Jordan's King Concludes Visit, Departs

NC0805200096 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1854 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 8 May (MENA)—Jordan's King Husayn, his wife, and his accompanying delegation left Cairo tonight following a visit of several hours.

President and Mrs. Husni Mubarak led the officials that saw King Husayn off at Cairo International Airport.

Egypt: 'Vanguards of Islamic Conquest' Announce Conditions To End Violence

MM0805135596 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 8 May 96 p 5

[Report by Muhammad Salah: "'Vanguards of Conquest' Announce 4 Conditions for Halting Violence"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — In the first reaction from religious groups in Egypt to the initiative to halt violence, which has attracted much interest in Egyptian circles over recent days, the "Vanguards of Islamic Conquest" [VIC] organization has set four conditions for responding to the initiative, which was launched by Khalid Ibrahim, amir of the Islamic Group in Aswan. The prominent lawyer Muntasir al-Zayyat adopted the initiative and started to work for its implementation.

The organization's reaction came one day after a fierce attack launched by the newspaper MAYU, mouthpiece of the ruling National [Democratic] Party, against religious groups, describing their members as "hirelings working for known quarters." The newspaper stressed the refusal to hold any dialogue with "the terrorists."

Observers believe that the conditions set by the VIC are impossible and ruled out any response to them by the government.

A prominent leader of the organization, living in a European state and sentenced in absentia to death,

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told AL-HAYAH over the telephone yesterday: "If the (Egyptian) Government has a sincere desire to work to spare blood, we will respond to the peace initiative launched by brother Khalid Ibrahim and sponsored by Muntasir al-Zayyat, but on the basis of a clear and specific offer from the government."

He pointed out that the organization's leaders in Egypt and abroad have studied the initiative, referred it to the organization's "legitimate committee," and decided to announce a number of conditions before announcing their agreement to it and issuing their orders to the organization's members to suspend the operations.

The leading figure listed the conditions as follows:

"— To stop arrest campaigns against members of the religious groups in all the governorates of Egypt;

"— To release all those detained under the emergency law, not those sentenced in connection with certain cases;

"— To cease to refer members of the religious groups to the military court, and to refer those accused in cases that are still under investigation to an ordinary judge;

"— To show seriousness in and move toward applying the Islamic Shari'ah."

He named three people who can be referred to regarding any details concerning the organization's position on the initiative. They are: Nabil al-Maghrabi, Muhammad al-Aswani, and 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Amir-al-Jaysh [last name as published]. The three are serving a life sentence in the Turah prison. He pointed out that the other organizations have to name those who are going to discuss on their behalf the issue of those held in prisons. [passage omitted]

Egypt: Alleged Egyptian 'Terrorist' Comments on Plot Against Mubarak

BK0905105096 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 9 May 96 p 12

[Report by Ismail Khan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Peshawar — The man who said he masterminded the assassination attempt on the life of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa has admitted that the group which had carried out the attack had left Pakistan.

"The operation was planned and executed by al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah [Islamic Group] which benefited from brothers who came to Sudan from Pakistan", disclosed Mustafa Hamza who has been accused by his country's intelligence agencies of being one of the main characters behind the assassination attempt on Mubarak in June last year. The Egyptian President had escaped the attempt on his life while attending a summit conference of African countries in the Ethiopian capital.

Hamza admitted he planned the operation but denied he was practically involved in its execution. In an interview with a Peshawar-based journalist of international Arabic newspaper, AL-HAYAH, in Afghanistan's eastern Konar province, Hamza revealed that two of the group members who had participated in the operation had traveled from Pakistan to the Sudanese capital Khartoum while the rest whose number he did not specify, flew directly to Addis Ababa to execute the plan.

Hamza is one of those few charged with the assassination of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat in 1981, jailed for seven years, went to Sudan after his release where he stayed for a month and later arrived in Pakistan in 1989 to participate in the Afghan Jehad. Shawqi Islamboli, brother of Khalid Islamboli, also accused of killing Sadat is also believed to be living in Afghanistan along with score other Egyptian militants. Most of them are said to be with the Hezb-e Eslami leader Golboddin Hekmatyar.

Mustafa Hamza informed that the group, comprising Afghan war veterans, had initially planned to carry out the attack in Egypt but altered the plans on the insistence of Sharif 'Abd-al-Rahman alias 'Umar Misri. "He convinced them not to go to Egypt and instead travel to Addis Ababa where they could have easily passed for Ethiopians due to their dark complexion." Sharif was eventually killed in the operation.

He vehemently denied the involvement of Sudan in the attempt. "Sudan has nothing to do with it and we have no 'brothers' living there right now", he insisted. He claimed that there were only two of them in the planning of the assassination attempt. "I'm here (in Afghanistan) and the second one is in another country. He will appear in the near future", he said but refused to disclose where he will appear. During the whole operation, he said, he remained in Afghanistan and did not travel either to Sudan or Ethiopia.

The Egyptian Ambassador in Pakistan Nauman Galal had told the Arabic weekly AL-WASAT that the Egyptian militants involved in a failed attempt against Husni Mubarak were living in Peshawar and Afghanistan under false names with forged documents. A senior Pakistani investigator confirmed to THE NEWS that Hamza has last been spotted in northern Afghanistan but he was unable to say whether the 38 year old Egyptian lived in Peshawar at any time. Hamza denied he was under the protection of any Afghan groups but said that he felt safe in the Taleban controlled area. "We've been living here without any fear", he said.

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With regard to his connections with 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, Mustafa Hamza conceded he continued to maintain relations with the blind Egyptian scholar now in the U.S. jail. "He is the mufti of al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah and he is our leader", he said.

Libya

Libya: U.S. Assailed for Threat to 'Chemical Plant'

LD0805172796 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1600 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 8 May (JANA) — Voice of America, the American intelligence mouthpiece radio, has quoted a spokesman for the American Defense Department as saying that America has a wide range of conventional weapons to use against what he called a chemical plant in Tarhunah, in the Great Jamahiriyah.

Commenting on America's continuing unpleasant raving, JANA's domestic affairs editor said: Thus it becomes clear to the world that terrorism has become a foundation of American foreign policy, and America is suffering from a diarrhoea of making allegations, seeking excuses, following a policy of misleading world public opinion without any decency, and openly falsifying facts against peoples that reject its attempt to impose its hegemony and domination, even if all the inhabitants of the Earth come out shouting the truth.

The editor further says that despite the blatant evidence that gives the lie to the American aggressive fabrications that Libya intends to build a chemical plant, and despite the fact that the world has seen that the subject of these fabrications is part of a civilization achievement, namely the biggest water-related project in the world, the American official comes up once again with this American illusion, using the language of aggression and terrorism which is entrenched in this damned mentality. [passage omitted]

The editor adds: This official American threat to use weapons and aggression against a nonexistent danger confirms to the world the premeditated American intention to commit aggression. This constitutes a threat to world security and stability, and reveals the unreasonable nature of this policy in which America wants to engulf the world. For at a time when America turns a blind eye to the real danger posed by the Israeli nuclear terror threat in the Arab region, with the Israeli enemy being in possession of 200 nuclear warheads and an arsenal of internationally prohibited weapons, everybody sees how the Americans deliberately seek to spread their allegations about fictitious things which exist only in the tyrannical American mentality. [passage omitted]

Libya: JANA Criticizes U.S. Campaign Against Chemical Factory

LD0905085596 Tripoli JANA in English 0820 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al-Maa [May] 9, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The radio of the American intelligence service known as Voice of America quoted the American war ministry spokesman as saying that America possessed many and varied options in the field of conventional weapons for use against what he claimed as a chemical weapons factory in Terhuna in the Great Jamahiriyah.

Commenting on this spiteful hallucination by America, JANA's editor for local affairs said thus it becomes clear to the whole world that terrorism has become a fundamental norm as indeed become a fundamental norm in the American foreign policy and that America is suffering from a diarrhea of making claims, creating pretext and exercising a policy of shamelessly misleading the world public opinion and distorting facts without hesitation against the peoples who oppose its attempts to impose domination and tyranny even if all the inhabitants of the globe came out shouting in favour of justice. [sentence as received]

The editor added: "Despite the unequivocal evidence and facts which refute the American hostile claims regarding Libya's desire to set up chemical factory and the support of the whole world that these lies in fact refer to a part of a civilizational achievement represented the biggest water project in the world. Once more, here is the American official repeating the same American myth using a tone reflecting a hostile and terrorist tendency well entrenched in his distorted mentality.

The editor wondered as to when this American distortion will stop exercising this exposed farce at the international level considering that the companies realizing the project are Korean companies which have the maps of the project and know its details and have head-office in their country and branches all over the world and that one of the heads of state in the world, President Ibrahim Mainassara of the Republic of Niger, visited the project in the company of crowds of correspondence [as received] of world media and found out the truth and refuted the American claims.

The editor pointed out "This official American threat to use weapons and threaten to carry out aggression against a non-existent danger shows before all the peoples of the world the pre-meditated intention for aggression, constitute a threat to international security and stability and reveals the depth of the vicious circle and the

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illogical policy which America is deliberately trying to drag the world to its abyss. Whilst it ignores the real danger posed by the Israeli nuclear terror in the Arab region through the possession by the Israeli enemy of 200 nuclear heads and various internationally banned weapons a fact which has become well known to all the countries of the world, every one is watching how the Americans are trying such claims on imaginary and non-existent things with which only the American tyrannical mentality is obsessed.

Concluding his commentary, JANA's editor for local affairs said "Although we in the Great Jamahiriyah no longer need to remind the peoples of the world who are fully aware about the size of the American lies against the Libyan Arab people from La Belle night club in Berlin to Al-Rabta then Terhuna, Lockerbie and the aborted American Atlantic aggression in 1986, but we began to feel sorry for the world from this serious disease which hit America and deteriorate to a point where it no longer come to distinguish that it merely a state amongst other states of the world where no one gave it the right to speak about another country which possess chemicals or nuclear while America is the biggest nuclear disease in the world which is pushing it for tyranny which is diminishing sooner or later.

Libya: Editor Hails EU's Stand Against U.S. Trade Policy

LD0905090896 Tripoli JANA in English 0810 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, Al-Maa [May] 9, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The official spokesman of the European Union [EU] asserted that the American measure banning the dealing of European companies with the countries which reject American policies was illegal and directly undermined the economic interest of the countries of the Union.

In press remarks published in the English capital on Tuesday [7 May] the spokesman said that this American policy expresses the American domination over others and has a political facade which can not be hidden. He reaffirmed the European Union's total rejection of American attempts to dominate the international economic activity or direct it to serve the interests of American foreign policy.

JANA's editor for international affairs saluted this correct and firm European stance which sincerely expressed the sound course which the member states of the European Union began to take steadily so as to safeguard the interests of their peoples as they realized the seriousness of this American selfish policy which evidence, known by the Europeans before anyone else, showed that America began to adopt which reached the point of directing the European sovereign political decision and shaping it in a manner which may serve primarily American interest.

The editor refer [as received] to the statement issued by the European Council in Luxembourg recently regarding these selfish American measures against European companies, the protest note submitted by the European Union's ambassador to Washington to the speaker of the American Congress in this respect and the courageous European collective move towards confronting this stupid American arrogance. The editor asked "What right has America got to allow it to restrict the activities of foreign companies belonging to sovereign countries with leading position in the world and are seeking to set up cordial and friendly relations with other countries in favour of their peoples? Is not this an imposition of American laws in a coercive manner on these countries and violation of international laws and conventions which govern economic relations amongst states in the world?

JANA's editor for international affairs concluded his commentary by reiterating that this noble European stance is worthy of respect in a world American tyranny and blackmail began to know no bounds of selfishness.

Libya: JANA Comments on U.S. Concern Over Relations With South Africa

LD0905083996 Tripoli JANA in English 0827 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tripoli, al-Maa [May] 19, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — JANA news agency said that America expressed what it described as its concern on the current close relations between South Africa and Libya.

The German news agency quoted the head of the American delegation to the conference organized by the U.S on trade and development in the South African city of Midrand as saying that the issue provoked concern.

Commenting on this, JANA's editor for African affairs stressed "One has only to express dismay at the level of American distortion and the falsification tone which became a fundamental norm in the American foreign policy. Here is America with all its claims of supporting free trade use [as received] all the means to impose restrictions and exert economic pressures against all the peoples of the world so as to implement its hostile and malicious intentions of imposing domination and exercising blatant blackmail which reached a level of political terrorism against the countries of the world.

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The editor added "This also begs the question as to where was America when South Africa was living under the yoke of apartheid for many years and the whole world knows that America was the biggest supporter for that ugly regime while the Great Jamahiriyah was supporting the people of South Africa until its final victory against the racist there when America was describing the people of South Africa as being terrorist.

The editor asserted that "America which was established on terrorism, does not care except about its interest in the first place and its fierce pressures became a norm in its dealing with other countries."

Concluding his commentary, JANA's editor for African affairs stressed "All evidence became clear to the countries and peoples of the world on the American imposture and farce. Otherwise what did lead America, which used to describe in the past the leaders in the struggle against the racist regime of South Africa as terrorists, to attend such conferences in this country which became free and sovereign and triumphed over the racist despite the unlimited support provided by America for the apartheid when it was imposed on the necks of the people of that African country.

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Bahrain

Bahrain: Source Confirms Cause of 7 May Gas Leak Explosion

JN0805201496 Manama WAKH in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 8 May (WAKH) — A responsible source in the Civil Defense Department of the Ministry of Interior told WAKH that the lab tests conducted by the criminal investigation agencies confirmed that the explosion that took place at a house in the Sanabis area, in which three persons were killed and four others were injured, was caused by a strong gas leak near a heat spark.

The source indicated that the three injured adults were treated and released from hospital, while a 5-year-old child remains in the hospital for further treatment.

Bahrain: Opposition Movement Calls For Civil Disobedience

NC0805152396 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 27 Apr 96 p 16

[IRNA Report from Tehran]

[FBIS Translated Text] An anti-regime movement in Bahrain called on the Bahraini people on Thursday [25 April] to launch a civil disobedience campaign for one week as a mark of protest against the establishment of a Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, which is intended to control religious activities in Bahrain.

According to AFP reporting from Nicosia, in a statement disseminated by the Bahrain Liberation Movement received in the capital of Cyprus the people of Bahrain were asked to carry out civil disobedience from 'Id al-Adha until the 40th day ceremonies for 'Isa Qanbar, who was a young Bahraini Muslim who was executed on 26 March on charges of killing a policeman.

The statement, which is signed by movement spokesman Mansur al-Jamri, adds: This Council is being established to combat the principles of the Shiites. Therefore all Shiite scholars in Bahrain and abroad are requested to boycott it.

Shaykh Mansur al-Jamri was exiled to Britain a few months ago.

According to the report, this Council was set up by decree of the amir of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman al-Khalifah, to supervise appointments of congregational imams and preachers by the Endowments Department, and to issue opinions on religious matters.

From the Bahrain Liberation Movement's vantage point, the establishment of such a council is an encroachment on the rights of the Bahraini Shiites, as the appointment of congregational imams and preachers is among the prerogatives of the Shiite community, not the government authorities.

Bahrain: Escalation of Violence 'Sign of Approaching Death'

JN0805114296 Manama WAKH in Arabic 0735 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Manama, 8 May (WAKH)— Bahraini newspaper AL-AYYAM says the escalation of violence and sabotage, on which the stray clique insists, is not a sign of strength and growing capabilities but a sign of approaching death after the exposure of the falsehood of the slogans raised by that clique. These slogans have been repeated by some mass media who have an interest in exacerbating the situation in Bahrain and who encourage this stray clique to commit violence and sabotage.

In an editorial today, the newspaper says: Detonating a bomb in a public place that is frequented by people or burning a commercial shop are not signs of loose security in the country, which these parties desperately want to realize to create confusion, terror, and chaos. These incidents can take place anywhere in the world. The security organs in the country are in complete control of the security situation and were efficiently able to dismantle the cells of these groups, chase their remnants, and thwart their plots, which they attempt to implement under instructions from abroad. These cells are now falling one after another and the crimes they commit against the homeland and all human beings on that good land are being exposed.

The newspaper adds: The determination of some parties to bring back a tense atmosphere to the country after the situation became calm and stable is a behavior that is not based on any patriotic feeling, but is an implementation of the desire of other parties that mainly want the country to be in a chaotic situation in order to reverse the cycle of development and construction to which all honorable citizens contributed. All individuals and sects in this homeland want security and peace, which are fundamental for a free and honorable life.

The newspaper concludes: It is painful for any person on this land, whether they are citizens or foreign residents, to be killed, injured, or scratched because this is the homeland of love, fraternity, and peace. We will not allow evil in this country, regardless of the price and sacrifices we have to make to protect it from any harm.

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Finance Minister on Plans To Reduce Arms Budget 20 Percent

MM0805135296 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 8 May 96 p 1

[Report by Fadiah al-Zu'bi in Kuwait: "Kuwaiti Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: The Government Is Committed to Eliminating the Budget Deficit and Reducing the Armaments Budget by 20 Percent"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwaiti Second Deputy Premier and Finance Minister Nasir al-Rawdan has stressed that the 1996-97 Kuwaiti draft budget is in tune with the development plan (1995/96-2000) which aims to eliminate the deficit in the fiscal year 1999-2000.

In a statement to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, al-Rawdan said yesterday that the government is confident that, by implementing the measures outlined in the plan, it can reduce and eliminate the budget deficit by that year (1999-2000).

He said that the draft budget includes a 20 percent decrease in the armaments budget.

Al-Rawdan denied rumors of parliamentary accusations that the government is not seriously trying to eliminate the deficit, saying that the deficit in Kuwait is to do with the format ['ajz haykali] rather than the figures.

Al-Rawdan expects the budget and development plan to encounter some opposition by some parliamentarians when they are discussed in the people's assembly. He expects them, however, to have the support of other parliamentarians, especially in view of the fact that the new budget has opted for raising the cost of some services which the government provides free or for a nominal fee.

It should be mentioned that the 1996-97 draft budget puts the expenses of the ministries and government administrations at 4.150 billion Kuwaiti dinars [KD], some KD1.450 billion in excess of general revenues, which will be covered from the states' general reserves. The revenues were estimated at KD3 billion, an increase of 3.09 percent over the current budget. The deficit was reduced by KD170 million compared to last year's deficit, while measures to reduce the budget in the development plan require it to be trimmed by KD250 million annually.

In the new budget there is a noticeable 2.74 percent increase in oil revenues over the current budget, as a result of having paid off the charges for extinguishing the oil wells in the 1995-96 budget. This budget includes a KD60 million increase in salaries for new appointments, a KD45 million increase in the projects and construction budget, and a noticeable 20 percent decrease in the armament and military support budget, whereby the new budget puts the funding for this item at KD400 million.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Defense Ministry Confirms Air Collision Over Dhahran

LD0805121696 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] An official source at the Ministry of Defense and Aviation has told SPA that two Mirage 2000 interceptor aircraft collided last night over Dhahran, in the east of the kingdom, where they were based in accordance with a UN surveillance resolution. The source added that the pilot of one of the two aircraft was killed, while the other landed normally in the allocated place. The source concluded by expressing regrets and offering condolences to the friendly French Government and the family of the dead pilot.

Saudi Arabia: Government Orders All Foreign Pilgrims To Leave

LD0805165996 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1350 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah, 8 May (SPA) — The Interior Ministry has called upon all pilgrims to the holy House of God, who are following God's grace to them in enabling them to perform the ordained pilgrimage, to return to their homelands without delay, and wishes them a safe return, God willing.

The ministry stressed that anyone who stays behind will be exposed to detention, punishment, and deportation. It also warned citizens and residents against providing accommodation or shelter for anyone staying behind, or concealing his/her stay, on pain of being liable to punishment. [passage omitted]

The ministry draws the attention of and warns everybody, Saudis or non-Saudis, against providing accommodation or shelter for anyone staying behind in any way. Anybody who employs, shelters, or conceals the stay of anybody staying behind will receive severe punishment. The maximum sentences of combined jail terms and fines will be applied. [passage omitted]

The ministry announces this to everyone in order to remind them, draw their attention, and stress the point to them. It expects everybody to abide by this announcement, be keen to implement it, and be totally cooperative with the competent authorities in the service of the public interest. [passage omitted]

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Iraq: Iraqi, UN Delegates Hold Third Session

JN0805192296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1905 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, 8 May (INA)—The Iraqi and UN delegations held the third session as part of the fourth round of dialogue on the issue of oil in exchange for food, medicine, and other basic needs.

After this session, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation to the talks, told journalists that another working session will be held late this evening, Baghdad time. [passage omitted]

[Baghdad INA in Arabic at 1530 GMT on 8 May reports: "Yesterday evening, the two delegations met for approximately four hours."]

Iraq: Iraqi, UN Delegates Hold Fourth Session

JN0905091196 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, 9 May (INA)—The delegations of Iraq and the UN General Secretariat agreed to hold a fifth session this evening, Iraq summer time, as part of the fourth round of dialogue which began in New York on 6 May.

An INA correspondent in New York said the two delegations held a fourth session last night. [passage omitted]

Iraq: U.S., UK Accused of 'Sabotaging' Draft Agreement

MM0905104696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 May 96 pp 1, 6

[Unattributed report: "Signs of Crisis in 'Oil-For-Food' Negotiations: Iraq Escalates Situation With United States and Britain, Rejects Any Additional Conditions"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] New York, AL-HAYAH — The negotiations over the implementation of the "oil-for-food" formula as stipulated by Resolution 986 has entered a stage in which the U.S. side and the Iraqi side are preparing to blame one another for the failure of the negotiations between the UN General Secretariat and the Iraqi Government. The Iraqi Council of Ministers has issued a statement holding the United States and Britain responsible "for any failure in the dialogue." It said that their interference in the negotiations "is an illegal act that entails sinister political objectives." Informed sources have said that the public statements made by U.S. officials focused on saying that the U.S. Administration wants the negotiations to succeed and does not rule out an agreement, paving the way for holding Iraq responsible for the failure of the fourth session of talks.

Iraqi chief delegate Ambassador 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari accused the United States and Britain of "sabotaging" a draft agreement reached with the United Nations by their demand for the introduction of amendments to the draft memorandum of understanding, amendments which are rejected by the Iraqi side. In the first public escalation with Washington and London, al-Anbari told journalists on Tuesday night that "the United States and Britain have sabotaged" the draft agreement reached on 10 April.

He added: "We cannot accept any new conditions." He said that "no one has the right to put aside all that we have reached (with the United Nations) for the sake of imposing his arbitrary wishes."

He added that he was not carrying with him to New York "any new ideas" concerning the draft memorandum of understanding containing the U.S. and British amendments and dated 22 April. He reiterated that the Iraqi delegation would start to negotiate "from the point at which we stopped on 10 April." And the United Nations must reconcile U.S. and British proposals and other proposals over which Iraq negotiated and reached an agreement with the United Nations.

He went on to say that the international organization "knows how to gather and rewrite them [proposals]. We are negotiating with the secretary general (Butrus-Ghali) over his ideas." He added: "I believe that our task now is to rearrange a memorandum the United States and Britain have crushed. I do not know whether we will be able to do that, but we will do our utmost." The U.S. and British proposals concern measures that give the Security Council sanctions committee the power to approve the sale of a quantity of oil worth $1 billion every three months to meet urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq, and to exclude the Iraqi Government from the process of purchasing food and medicines worth $130-150 million allocated by Resolution 986 for the Kurds in north Iraq. Baghdad is rejecting these amendments.

High-ranking sources acquainted with the U.S. stand stressed that Washington is insisting on its amendments and the need for Iraq to accept them as they are on the basis of the phrase "take it or leave it." The sources said that the U.S. Administration is not interested in securing a way out for President Saddam Husayn "to save his face." And that it will allow Baghdad to implement Resolution 986, "but not just in any manner." The sources added that the administration will not accept an agreement on the implementation of the resolution representing "a victory for Saddam."

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The sources said that the administration — through Ambassador Madeleine Albright and Robert Pelletreau, assistant secretary of state for Middle Eastern affairs — "is preparing itself to prove that it has no objection" to Baghdad's agreement to implement Resolution 986 in accordance with the memorandum of understanding, and that it actually "welcomes it" and hopes that an agreement on it will be reached soon, in preparation for pinning all the blame on the Iraqi leadership, in whose hand is the key to accepting the memorandum and beginning to implement it. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Barzani on Kurdish Issues, Oil for Food

MM0705160796 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 4 May 96 p 2

[Interview with Mas'ud Barzani, leader of the Kurdistan Democratic Party, by Salwa al-Ustuwani in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Al-Ustuwani] What is the purpose of your visit to Damascus and talks with President Hafiz al-Asad and senior Syrian officials, after this lengthy absence?

[Barzani] My visit to Damascus came in response to the Syrian leadership's invitation to examine and discuss issues of mutual interest. My meeting with President Hafiz al-Asad was positive, fruitful, and productive. We discussed the Iraqi people's situation in general, the situation in the Kurdish region, and bilateral relations in particular, in addition to the situation of the opposition. Our views were close and very similar. I felt that President al-Asad has shown interest in the Iraqi people's situation and suffering.

[Al-Ustuwani] What were President al-Asad's views on the issues raised?

[Barzani] President al-Asad stressed that he fully supports everything that the Iraqi people decide of their own free will, and the need to leave the Iraq issue to the Iraqi people. He also stressed Syria's and his personal support for the Iraqi people's decisions. However, as I said, President al-Asad did not delve into the details of this issue, but instead believes that it is up to the Iraqi people to decide.

[Al-Ustuwani] Did your talks with senior Syrian officials focus on the same issues?

[Barzani] In addition to these issues, we discussed some points concerning our bilateral relations such as the commercial and cultural exchanges and exchange visits between the universities' heads and faculties' deans. We discussed these issues in detail.

[Al-Ustuwani] Does this mean that your visit is of a special nature?

[Barzani] Every visit to Syria is of special importance. My relations with President al-Asad are very friendly. My visit is that of a brother to his brothers and country. In view of the current regional and international circumstances, the Damascus visit is particularly special and important.

[Al-Ustuwani] As you know, there is a crisis at present between Syria and Turkey over the waters, the Kurdish Workers' Party, and the Turkish-Israeli military agreement. Is your visit in any way related to this?

[Barzani] Actually, we do not wish to be a party in the regional disputes unless we can play a positive role. It is difficult for us to be a party in the dispute, as we already have enough problems.

[Al-Ustuwani] What role would you be able to play in this context?

[Barzani] Our presence in the region is a force that should not be taken lightly. We have a land, a force, and various capabilities, and we can surely play a positive, rather than negative, role in this issue.

[Al-Ustuwani] How do you view the Turkish-Israeli military agreement, which was condemned by Arab states and some Islamic states?

[Barzani] This agreement is certainly interesting. I believe that the experiences that Israel itself, Turkey, and the region in general have had, prove that wars do not provide solutions and that they do not serve the peoples' interests. There must be a search for peace and alliances that harm others must be avoided. We have seen that ultimately neither military alliances nor wars serve any purpose. Everyone must revert to peace.

[Al-Ustuwani] Was Security Council Resolution 986, concerning "oil for food," discussed?

[Barzani] Yes, we discussed this issue and its outcome. Our position is clear. We have supported the resolution, and the Kurdistan Democratic Party [KDP's] Political Bureau issued a statement outlining the KDP's position on the way to deal with this resolution. We have supported this resolution and we will provide all the necessary help to implement it.

[Al-Ustuwani] Then you will allow the export of Iraqi oil to Turkey?

[Barzani] Of course. If an agreement with the United Nations is reached, we will definitely allow the oil exports.

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[Al-Ustuwani] Did you stipulate any conditions in this context?

[Barzani] We have not made any conditions, because we believe that this will alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people as a whole. We are very happy to be able to play a role in alleviating the Iraqi people's suffering.

[Al-Ustuwani] How would you characterize your relations with Turkey and Iran?

[Barzani] Turkey is the gateway for all the humanitarian aid organizations in the region. Everything transits via Turkey and the planes protecting the region are based in Turkey. Naturally, these and other factors have created relations of a sort between ourselves and Turkey in this context. Outside this context, there are no relations between us. Iran is a neighbor, and there are still some 706,000 Iraqi Kurdish refugees in Iran. It is only natural that we should have friendly relations of cooperation, as is the case with Turkey.

[Al-Ustuwani] There are rumors of some Turkish and Iranian attempts to have some influence over your party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] (Jalal Talabani). Is this true?

[Barzani] The truth is that all states in the region are trying to have some influence. We in the KDP want to establish relations of cooperation, based on mutual respect, with all neighboring states, but reject any state's trusteeship or special influence over us.

[Al-Ustuwani] How are your relations with the Turkish Kurds?

[Barzani] We consider them our brethren and support their demands and their rights. There was a problem between us which was not of our making. It is now over and there are no more problems.

[Al-Ustuwani] Do you support the establishment of a Kurdish state?

[Barzani] As a Kurd, this is my ambition, and it is every Kurd's ambition, but not by violent means, because it is not possible to achieve it in this way.

[Al-Ustuwani] How do you envision the Turkish Kurds' future?

[Barzani] The situation is clear. A peaceful solution must ultimately be found, because this issue concerns a people, and cannot be resolved militarily. We believe that there must be democratic reforms and that the Kurdish issue must be dealt with democratically. This is the only way to resolve the Kurdish issue in Turkey. I stress again that a military solution would serve no purpose and would not have a happy ending.

[Al-Ustuwani] How is the current situation in the Iraqi Kurdish areas?

[Barzani] Like the other Iraqi areas, the Kurdish areas are suffering from the blockade. However, if we compare the situation in the Kurdish areas to the situation in the central and northern areas, I believe that the situation in the Kurdish area is better, especially in the countryside, because there is an economic recovery and a tendency toward self-sufficiency. This means that a major positive change is taking place.

[Al-Ustuwani] Are you prepared to transform the Kurdish areas into an arena for the Iraqi opposition's activities?

[Barzani] We have in fact turned it into that. Our areas were and will remain open, but this depends on the Iraqi opposition. Will it choose to come and live in the area, or will it prefer to live outside the homeland.... Our areas are always open to them.

[Al-Ustuwani] Do you believe that the Iraqi opposition can play an important role in changing the situation in Iraq?

[Barzani] As long as the Iraqi opposition is waiting for others to make initiatives on its behalf, it will not be able to achieve that, and neither will it be able to play any part. It must make its own initiatives, but unfortunately, so far, nothing of the kind has happened.

[Al-Ustuwani] Some Iraqi opposition leaders occasionally hint that the opposition needs an international cover. Some Iraqi sources have welcomed a U.S. role in this context. What are your views on this matter?

[Barzani] I believe that the opposition must prove its worth and effectiveness before thinking about an international cover. If it behaves in a democratic fashion and shows that it has some influence and sway over the Iraqi people, the United States and others will then help support the opposition. However, if the opposition cannot prove its worth, power, and capabilities, I do not believe that others will run after it or give it any importance.

[Al-Ustuwani] It was noticed that you did not attend the recent Iraqi opposition forces' consultation meeting in Damascus. It seems that the Iraqi opposition suffered some internal upheavals during the meeting, while some people said that it had failed. What is your position with regard to the opposition and are you satisfied with the consultations meeting's outcome and the opposition's performance?

[Barzani] We believe that, despite all the disagreements which occurred, the meeting was not a complete failure.

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We do however have some reservations, namely with regard to the exclusion of an allied party with a great history in the struggle (the Communist Party). This should not have happened. However, as you know, it was decided that the meetings should continue later, and of course we support any serious or patriotic Iraqi action. Unfortunately, the basic problem is that the Iraqi opposition is waiting for others to make a move on its behalf, and this, in itself, is a major catastrophe. Personally, I was unable to attend the meeting, because of previous official engagements and the fact that I was involved in many issues that I could not ignore.

[Al-Ustuwani] Do you believe that the regional and international forces have any influence on the Iraqi situation and in the decisions that could be taken on your behalf?

[Barzani] I would like to stress that we have kept the independence of our decisionmaking process despite the fact that this has proved very costly. However, whatever the price, keeping the independence of the decisionmaking process is the best course. Nobody can ignore the fact that the situation in the region or in Iraq is not immune to international and regional influences. Yes, there are many influences.

[Al-Ustuwani] How are your relations with Jalal Talabani and his party? Are there still serious disagreements which could lead to a military confrontation?

[Barzani] We now have a truce, with both sides showing their commitment to this truce which is still holding, and we hope that we will reach a peaceful solution in the end.

[Al-Ustuwani] Is it then possible to shed the light on the situation of the Kurdish issue now?

[Barzani] The Kurds' situation has now changed, particularly after 1991. True, there are still some internal struggles and many problems, but on an international and regional scale the Kurdish issue will take on very important dimensions and its full scope in the next phase. I believe, and remain convinced, that there will be a strategic alliance in the future between the Arab and Kurdish nations. Independence for the Kurdish homeland and people or part of the Kurdish people cannot be achieved at present. The Kurdish people are now more mature and more perceptive. Their situation and capabilities have changed. The situation is different now.

[Al-Ustuwani] What are the prospects of achieving an Arab- Kurdish alliance?

[Barzani] There is a common understanding, and I believe that conferences and encounters between Kurdish and Arab thinkers and scholars are an important step which could help achieve this understanding, and later a strategic alliance. We did not give this issue any importance in the past, but we are now focusing more on it in order to work out a common agenda. I believe that the conditions are now right and more favorable.

[Al-Ustuwani] Has this issue been raised with the Syrians during your current visit?

[Barzani] We have not raised it yet, but I will raise it during my meetings with Syrian officials over the next two days. We will also meet with some thinkers for an exchange of views with them on this issue.

[Al-Ustuwani] What is the situation in Iraq now after the [recent] series of incidents?

[Barzani] The situation is very tragic and the blockade has caused great harm to the Iraqi people. I can only describe the situation there as tragic.

[Al-Ustuwani] Do you have any specific solution in mind?

[Barzani] It must be a radical solution. The Iraqi people must be in a position to make a decision and give their view about everything quite openly, in free and democratic parliamentary elections and in circumstances where the freedom of expression would be guaranteed. I believe that this is the solution. With regard to the Kurdish region's relations with the central government, we believe that federal relations would be a fine solution for the Kurdish issue. With regard to Iraq, there must be a democratic regime, in the full sense of the term.

[Al-Ustuwani] Five years ago you met with Iraqi President Saddam Husayn, matters seemed to be heading toward establishing relations, but suddenly there was an unexpected change and a separation. Why?

[Barzani] In 1991 there was an uprising in Kurdistan and the other Iraqi regions. The uprising caused rapid and important developments in the region. Afterward, we entered into a dialogue with the government. I met with the Iraqi president in Baghdad and we tried to reach an agreement. We were not thinking at all about tactics, but there remained some issues on which we did not agree and for which we could not reach radical solutions. The government then withdrew its administration of Kurdistan, and this in turn led to a separation between the Kurdish region and the central government.

[Al-Ustuwani] In light of the current international and regional circumstances, do you believe that there will be another opportunity to resume this dialogue with President Saddam Husayn?

[Barzani] At present I do not believe that such a dialogue will resume and there are no indications that this may happen.

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[Al-Ustuwani] Do you not think that Security Council Resolution 986 on oil is a prelude to more relief in Iraq, or do you think that it will serve the Iraqi regime's interests?

[Barzani] It is difficult to tell. There is no doubt, however, that the resolution and its implementation will alleviate the Iraqi people's suffering. As to whether or not this is a prelude to more relief for the government, that may or may not be the case. What saddens us greatly is that the Iraqi people are suffering badly. As far as we are concerned, we can alleviate the suffering through our approach to Resolution 986.

Iraq: Official Denies Report on al-Asad-Saddam Summit

TA0805133596 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 7 May 96 pp 1, 15

[Report by Fu'ad Abu-Hijlah]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman, AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH — Iraq yesterday categorically denied rumors of a secret and sudden summit between Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad.

A senior Iraqi official told AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH that "Iraq welcomes any step leading to rapprochement and understanding with the Arab brothers and does not object to attending a bilateral or full summit, but the Iraqi-Syrian summit reported by an expatriate Arab magazine never took place."

The Iraqi official, who was responding to our questions on the telephone, said that the current Iraqi situation as well as the Syria situation might push for a meeting and rapprochement. He noted that "Iraq always supports joint Arab action under all conditions, not just during times of crisis, but the talk about a secret summit between President Saddam Husayn and the Syrian president on the Iraqi-Syrian border is baseless, because this summit occurred only in the mind of the owner of the magazine that published the report." The Iraqi official added: "All of you know the stance of this magazine and its owner toward Iraq." [passage omitted]

Iraq: Saddam Discusses Incentive Programs With Cabinet

JN0805183096 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 8 May 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] With God's blessing, leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, presided over the 17th session of the Council of Ministers. His excellency talked about the importance of personal incentives, saying: Our socialism is distinguished for encouraging personal incentives for employees to improve research and performance in educational, industrial, and agricultural areas, as well as other walks of life.

His excellency, may God care for him, was commenting on the performance of the administrative and training bodies and their relationship with the development of education.

The council also discussed the general exams for the various levels of education and ways to introduce an incentive system for employees to attract qualified individuals to the general exams area.

The Council of Ministers endorsed the incentive system for general exams employees. When the Council of Ministers started discussing the incentive system for Trade Ministry employees, the leader president, may God preserve him, referred to the existing, vital tie between the Trade Ministry and the citizens through the supply ration, as well as to the meaning of this tie in terms of popular monitoring of the performance of Trade Ministry departments, especially of the items covered by the supply ration.

The council approved the incentive system for Trade Ministry employees in appreciation of the role they are playing at a time when our people are facing the unjust blockade and its effects.

Regarding the start of the harvesting and marketing of wheat and barley crops, the council stressed the importance of field inspection and joint efforts to make the campaign successful in order to reinforce our people's steadfastness and patience. The council also discussed several topics on its agenda and made the necessary recommendations and decisions on them.

Iraq: Blast Reported in Intelligence Building in Karkuk

NC0805162496 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1500 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A time bomb went off inside the Iraqi regime's general intelligence building in the Tis'in area of Karkuk on 5 April. Reporting this today, KURDISTAN NWAY newspaper did not mention any casualties or damage caused by the explosion.

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Iraq: Opposition Radio Reports Anti-Regime Attacks

JN0805152896 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of heroic Islamic Resistance members attacked criminal Muzhir Naji, an intelligence official, at the tyrant's presidential office. The sources said that the jihad operation took place as Major Muzhir Naji was driving his car toward an intelligence office in al-Ma'mun quarter in Baghdad. The said criminal was seriously injured.

Muzhir Naji is one of the criminals who shed the blood of many of our people during the Sha'ban intifadah [in 1991]. He also participated in the executions of a number of 14 July Battalion members who revolted against the regime in Abu-Ghurayb, near Baghdad, last year.

In another development, the Islamic Resistance shelled the sabotage engineering project near al-Basrah's marshlands. The opposition AL-SHAHADAH newspaper sources said that the shelling targeted the engineering project, which is drying out the remaining parts of (al-Sulayyin) marshland in northwest al-Basrah Governorate. The newspaper said that the shelling destroyed two shovels, a vehicle, and some engineering equipment. A number of workers at the project site were killed or wounded. The paper added that the regime had to stop work at the site for several days.

In addition, an Islamic Resistance group attacked the tyrant's troops in al-Suwayb Subdistrict in al-Qurnah District. The sources said the attack inflicted heavy losses on the regime's troops and positions in the northern al-Basrah marshlands. They said that a first lieutenant was among those killed. A vehicle was damaged, a tent was burned, and an ammunition stockpile destroyed.

Iraq: Opposition Says Col. al-Samarra'i Joins Ranks

JN0805150796 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1215 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraqi opposition sources said a senior officer recently sought asylum in the liberated areas in the northern part of the homeland. The sources said that Colonel 'Abd-al-Basit Shitab al-Samarra'i expressed his desire to join the opposition after reaching the liberated north last week.

The sources previously said that Brigadier General Najib al-'Usaymi joined the opposition forces after announcing his disavowal of the tyrant regime. The liberated areas are the most important outlets for the military to abandon the regime, which has used the Armed Forces to quell the people and boost its power. Increasing numbers of soldiers and officers are joining the opposition. They are welcomed and attended to by the opposition factions and movements.

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Israel: Peres Says UN Report on Qana 'Strange'

TA0805151296 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the UN report on the Qana village incident, Prime Minister Shim'on Peres said that the conclusions of the report are strange and ignore the fact that the terrorists were firing at Israel's northern settlements from that same area the week preceding the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] attack. Peres was speaking to students in Beersheba, and our correspondent Uri Binder heard him:

[Begin Binder recording] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres visited Beersheba today and met city leaders, students, and youths. With a confident and quiet manner, Peres spoke with regret about the Qana incident, and expressed his hope that new agreements will be signed with the Palestinians. Peres denied reports that Shaykh Ahmad Yasin will be freed soon, saying that no such decision has been made.

Speaking on the issue of terror, the prime minister said Iran's support for terror is very serious. According to him, the Iranians are busy issuing terrorist threats against Israel and supporting terror organizations that plan to hit Israeli targets in Israel and abroad. The most serious Iranian threat, however, is their attempt to develop their nuclear capability. The Palestinians are an old rival, and the Iranians are the new one, Peres said. [end recording]

Israel: IAF Drone Unit Commander on Qana Incident Film

TA0805163396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The commander of the Israel Air Force's [IAF] drone unit, Colonel B., says an analysis of the drone's videotape shows, on the basis of distance and time measurements taken from it, that the UN soldier could not have filmed the drone before 1417 [1117 GMT] — that is, three minutes after the artillery bombardment on Qana ended. Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that Col. B. said the drone spotted Qana and the smoke coming up from it only after the firing took place, and that was when the UN soldier filmed the drone.

Israel: Baraq Thanks Christopher for U.S. Support on UN Qana Report

TA0805182996 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq met U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher in Washington. The two discussed the establishment of the agreement of understandings monitoring committee. Minister Baraq said that in the meeting Israel proposed several ideas for the committee's makeup and the nature of its work. He confirmed Israel is proposing that the headquarters of the monitoring committee be located in Cyprus and that its work be based on appeals directed from the various sides. The representatives of the countries involved in the monitoring committee will meet in Washington on Friday [10 May] to finalize its operating method. Israel will be represented by Ambassador Itamar Rabinovich. Minister Baraq thanked Secretary Christopher for the U.S. position on the UN report on the Qana incident.

Foreign Minister Baraq also met his Omani counterpart. Minister Baraq said that the Omani minister expressed regret for the incidents in Lebanon, but expressed the hope that the understandings would be preserved.

Israel To Ask UNSC To 'Reconsider' Renewal of UNIFIL Mandate

TA0905062196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] David Peleg, Israel's acting ambassador to the United Nations, says Israel will ask the UN Security Council [UNSC] members to reconsider the renewal of UNIFIL's [UN Interim Force in Lebanon] mandate. Interviewed by our correspondent, Peleg said the Qana affair and Hizballah's firing from sites very close to UNIFIL positions illustrate the UN force's weaknesses and the difficulties it has implementing its mandate.

Israel: UN Official Denounces Israeli Call for UNIFIL Mandate Review

NC0905100096 Paris AFP in English 0930 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Beirut, May 9 (AFP) — A spokesman for the UN peacekeeping force in southern Lebanon on Thursday [9 May] dismissed an Israeli call for a review of the force's mandate as an attempt by Israel to "defend" itself after the Qana massacre.

"Israel is an independent and sovereign country so it is entitled to say whatever it pleases but it cannot deny the casualties we have taken over the years in order to defend itself over Qana," UNIFIL spokesman Timur Goksel told AFP.

Israel's delegate to the United Nations David Peleg called on the UN Security Council Thursday to reconsider its position on UNIFIL's mandate, which comes up for renewal in July.

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"The fact that Hizballah fired numerous rockets from positions near UNIFIL bases showed the difficulty the peacekeepers have faced in carrying out their mission," Peleg told the radio.

Israel has launched a counter-offensive after the United Nations issued a report alleging that the Israeli army deliberately shelled a refugee-packed UN base on April 18, killing 102 civilians. More than one hundred people were wounded, including four Fijian peacekeepers. The attack came during Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath which it launched on April 11 to stop the Iranian-backed Hizballah from firing Katyusha rockets on northern Israel. Israel said the Qana tragedy was a mistake and that the shelling was aimed at a nearby Hizballah position.

"After Qana we had 30 incidents of close firing on UN bases from the Israeli army and airforce, causing damage at two Ghanean compounds, a Nepalese position and to a Finnish armoured personnel carrier," Goksel said. He said UN bases in south Lebanon came under Israeli fire 240 times during the Israeli onslaught and close firing from Hizballah 15 time during the same period.

"Of course we have faced many difficulties over the years and many of our peacekeepers have died or have been hurt in Lebanon," Goksel said.

The 5,000-member UN Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was deployed in southern Lebanon in 1978 following an Israeli invasion carried out in retaliation for a PLO cross-border raid into Israel.

A total of 206 peacekeepers have died, "about half of them in action," Goksel said.

Israel: Defense Establishment 'Unanimous' PNC Amended Charter

TA0905062096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0405 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Palestine National Council [PNC] indeed revoked the clauses in the Palestinian Charter calling for Israel's destruction, representatives of the intelligence community asserted in deliberations held by the defense establishment. The Palestinians claim the wording of the resolution was coordinated by Israeli officials and Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports:

[Ben-Menahem] The arguments of political elements, Arabists, and other PLO experts over the question of whether the PNC amended the charter and revoked some of its clauses will probably continue. However, it turns out that the defense establishment is absolutely unanimous on this question. The assessment voiced in meetings attended by army intelligence, Shin Bet, and Civil Administration officers was that a resolution had indeed been passed to amend the charter, and that the clauses calling for Israel's destruction had been revoked.

A senior defense source sitting in on the meetings notes that the Palestinian street in the territories also interpreted the PNC's resolution as meaning that the clauses calling for Israel's destruction had definitely been repealed. The defense source is understanding of the fact that a new charter has not yet been adopted, saying that it is hard for the Palestinians to do so now. Some components of the new charter are related to the negotiations on the permanent arrangement, and it is hard for the Palestinians to draft it at this point, at the very outset of the negotiations.

As for Yasir 'Arafat's letter to Peres with the wording of the resolution, the defense source says that the letter in English clearly contains the word amended [last word in English], in the past tense, which shows that the charter has been changed. The English wording is important, the source says, since all international accords and the agreements with the Palestinians are written in English, making it hard for the Palestinians to renege on the letter in the future.

On the same issue, a senior Palestinian source says the wording of the PNC resolution was coordinated by Abu-Mazin and Yo'el Singer, the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser. The wording was known in advance and was acceptable to Israel, the Palestinian source says, rhetorically wondering why the Palestinians are being charged with fraud.

Israel: 'Sources' Apprehensive About Abu-Marzuq Extradition

TA0905084096 Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew 9 May 96 p 1

[Report by Arye Dayan and Miryam Fuchs]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Political sources in Jerusalem estimated yesterday that it will be very long before the proceedings for the extradition to Israel of Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] political desk, are completed. The view was voiced in the wake of the ruling by the U.S. federal court yesterday which declared Abu-Marzuq subject to extradition to Israel.

Political elements fear, however, that the extradition of the head of the Hamas political arm may spark a new wave of terrorist attacks. Israeli officials said that Abu-Marzuq's lawyers are certain to appeal the federal court's ruling and that the appeal will be followed by

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a very long series of legal sessions that may last many months, or even longer.

The prime minister's bureau and the Justice Ministry yesterday refrained from issuing an official reaction to the U.S. federal court ruling. Political circles said that Israel naturally welcomes the court's decision, but the overall reaction was rather reserved.

One political element voiced satisfaction with the fact that yesterday's decision "is not immediately operational." He explained that Abu-Marzuq's extradition at this time is liable to induce more terror attacks by Hamas.

Abu-Marzuq's extradition at this time could foil a move that is apparently being worked out, according to which Hamas founder Shaykh Ahmad Yasir will be released from Israeli prison in return for his calling on his organization to recognize the Oslo accords and stop staging terrorist attacks. [passage omitted]

Israel: PA's International Communication Services Restored

TA0905083496 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0800 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Bezeq, the national telephone company, has restored international communication services to the Palestinian Authority [PA] after the latter promised to forego 5 million shekels from the sum the Civil Administration is supposed to give it. This will go toward paying an outstanding debt of 29 million shekels. Our correspondent Dan Bielsky points out that international communication services were disconnected two days ago after the PA failed to comply with Bezeq's recurring demands to settle its debt.

Israel: Closure Further Eased; Group of Workers Allowed Entry

TA0905050796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Israel is further easing the closure of the territories. For the first time since the closure was imposed following the wave of suicide bombings in February and March, a group of Palestinian workers from the territories is being allowed into Israel regardless of their age. Prime Minister Peres and the coordinator of activities in the territories are allowing 400 workers from the territories to work at Kibbutz Bet Hashitta. Their permit is for seasonal work only, and the workers will be escorted by the security forces. A spokesman for the coordinator of activities said it was a humanitarian move. Until now Israel has allowed 10,000 Palestinians 38 years and older to return to their jobs inside Israel.

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Jordan: Information Minister Confirms 12 May Cairo Summit

JN0905070096 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said that a three-way summit, grouping His Majesty King Husayn, Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and Palestinian National Authority President Yasir 'Arafat, will be held in Cairo on Sunday 12 May. He said the summit will focus on bolstering the peace process, with emphasis on the Palestinian-Israeli talks on the final status of the West Bank and Gaza. The summit will also discuss the latest developments in the peace process in the light of the recent changes.

Jordan: King Returns From Egypt, Terms Cairo Talks 'Successful'

JN0805204996 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur returned home a little while ago. His majesty held talks with His Excellency Muhammad Husni Mubarak, president of the Arab Republic of Egypt. Senior officials from the two sisterly countries participated in the talks, which centered on bilateral relations and regional developments in the wake of the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which harmed the peace process.

The two sides reviewed the developments related to the peace process and showed their support for the recent cease-fire understanding reached in Lebanon. They voiced their support for the Lebanese Government in spreading its sovereignty over all of the Lebanese territories. The two sides also stressed their support for the Palestinian Arab people and the Palestinian National Authority, which began the final-status negotiations in the Palestinian-Israeli peace process two days ago.

His Majesty King Husayn briefed President Mubarak on the results of his talks with the leaders of the European states that he visited recently. These talks centered on strengthening Europe's partnership with Middle Eastern countries in a bid to build the economies of the region's states as a means of bolstering peace, entrenching it on the ground, and advancing it in a manner that guarantees the realization of a comprehensive and just peace in the region. The talks also dealt with the current Arab situation and the efforts that both countries can make to clear the Arab atmosphere and achieve reconciliation. In this regard, the two leaders reiterated their support for the Arab League and the institutions of common Arab action.

In statements to reporters at the airport, his majesty described the talks he held with President Mubarak as successful. [passage omitted]

Jordan: King —'I Do Not Want To Interfere in Israeli Elections'

JN0905083696 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 9 May 96 pp 1, 19

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, PETRA—[passage omitted] His Majesty King Husayn and Her Majesty Queen Nur returned to Amman last night following a tour that took them to South Africa, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Egypt. [passage omitted]

In press statements upon his return to Amman, the king said his tour was very successful. [passage omitted]

Asked about his majesty's assessment of the peace process developments in the light of his talks in Europe, his majesty said that he hopes the positive action to establish a comprehensive and just peace will resume. He said: There may have been some developments recently which obstructed the peace process, but the situation in the region became stable again and the efforts seeking to boost the peace process will continue.

Asked about the final status talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis, His Majesty King Husayn said: As always, we stand ready to provide all support and backing to the Palestinians to enable them to regain their rights. We have no other goal. [passage omitted]

Asked if the Likud's winning of the Israeli elections later this month will affect the peace process, his majesty said: I do not want to interfere in Israeli elections. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Ambassador on 'Incidents' Involving Jordanians in Iraq

MM0805154396 London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic 5-11 May 96 p 12

[Report by Mazin Hijazi in Amman: "The Jordanian Ambassador to Baghdad Has Gone Home: There Have Been Attacks on All Diplomats in Baghdad"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Jordanian Government has recalled its ambassador in Baghdad, Bassam Qaqish, following a series of incidents involving the murder and disappearance of many Jordanians in Iraq. AL-MAJALLAH met with the recalled ambassador, who previously held the post of inspector general with the Jordanian Forces and reached the rank of general. Because of his diplomatic status, the ambassador refrained from commenting on the current situation in Iraq and its leadership's actions.

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[Hijazi] After General Husayn Kamil's return and assassination, murders and disappearances of Jordanians in Iraq have increased. How do you explain this?

[Qaqish] Murders were also taking place in Iraq before Gen. Husayn Kamil's return. Many people have been subjected to various incidents in Iraqi cities. There is a vast number of Jordanians living in Iraq. They currently number 43,000, with 4,150 male and female students studying in Iraq's universities and institutes. These are scattered all over Iraq. It is normal that, with such numbers, there should be incidents.

[Hijazi] But the three Jordanians who were killed recently were the victims of a military squad.

[Qaqish] The group which intercepted the Jordanian truck carrying sugar were in military uniform. This group took the truck to an isolated place, killed the driver and his companions, dismantled the truck, and buried it with the victims in the sand.

The Jordanian Embassy in Baghdad has offered a reward for anyone giving information which might lead to the discovery of the perpetrators. The security authorities were able to arrest them along with the bulldozer driver who buried the victims and the truck. The merchants who bought the sugar were also arrested and are being questioned.

[Hijazi] Dr. 'Abdallah al-Nusur, the minister for higher education, told journalists that these incidents were premeditated.

[Qaqish] I have no idea about Dr. al-Nusur's statement, and he might have more information than I do. I cannot say whether they were premeditated until the investigation is over.

Ambassador Qaqish said that hold-ups and thefts occur daily in Iraq and that members of the Arab and foreign diplomatic corps are not immune from them. A counselor at the Egyptian Embassy had his car stolen. The Algerian ambassador, his wife, and the Sudanese and Vietnamese ambassadors, all had their cars stolen. There was even an attempt to steal the car of the assistant military counselor at the Jordanian Embassy.

[Hijazi] Is your recall an indication of the government's intention to scale down diplomatic representation in Iraq?

[Qaqish] I was recalled to explain the Iraqi Government's views on the recent incidents. I have explained all the facts to Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti, who will decide. The recall of ambassadors does not usually mean their withdrawal. However, in Jordan, we do not accept our sons being killed, be it in Iraq or elsewhere.

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Lebanon: U.S. Ambassador Meets With al-Hirawi; Comments Reported

NC0805125096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] President Ilyas al-Hirawi has received U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Richard Jones at the B'abda Palace. Jones said there are no obstacles to forming the monitoring group. Our correspondent at the B'abda Palace, Yazbik Wahbah, reports:

[Begin Wahbah recording] U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones stressed that the meeting in Washington on Friday [10 May] is part of the mechanism of the April Understanding to reach an agreement on forming the monitoring group. He voiced his hope that views will be in agreement. He denied that there are differences between the French and the Americans over this committee. He said the U.S. Administration is still studying the Lebanese paper and the reply has not yet been prepared. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Iran's Khonsari Hands Buwayz Message, Comments

NC0805124296 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has received a message from his Iranian counterpart, 'Ali Akbar Velayati. The message was delivered by Mohamad Kazem Khonsari, the head of the Middle East and North Africa desk at the Iranian Foreign Ministry. Khonsari said the message deals with the need to close ranks to confront common enemies. He said he delivered a similar message to Syrian Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' yesterday.

Khonsari pointed out that a delegation from the Iranian Ministries of Housing and Construction is visiting Lebanon on a field study so that Iran can share in reconstructing buildings destroyed by the Israeli aggression. He said the aid will be in line with Iran's resources and will be given to all affected factions.

Regarding the monitoring committee, Khonsari said its task is to determine who is the aggressor and who starts attacks. He stressed that he read the Syrian-Lebanese paper on the formation of the committee. He noted that he heard a report from Syrian Foreign Minister al-Shar' on the achievements of the committee. He said it is in the interest of Syria and Lebanon to implement the agreement accurately. [passage omitted]

Lebanon: Egyptian Speaker Meets al-Hirawi, Birri, Comments

NC0805144496 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Egyptian People's Assembly Speaker Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur and his accompanying delegation met with President Ilyas al-Hirawi this morning. He conveyed greetings from President Husni Mubarak. Surur condemned the Israeli aggression against Lebanon, which failed to achieve its goals. He said that the aggression only enhanced Arab solidarity. He stressed the need for implementation of Security Council resolution 425 to bring about a fair and comprehensive peace, for which Egypt is working, and not a capitulatory peace. He described the Qana massacre as a mark of disgrace in the history of the Israeli people. He stressed that his country is seeking to alter the U.S. stand, which is biased toward Israel. He said:

[Begin Surur recording] Criticism of the U.S. bias toward Israel cannot be brought about by compulsion or violent reaction, but through talks and discussions. He said that Egyptian diplomacy is doing all it can so that the U.S. stand will become fair and not biased toward Israel. The U.S. stand will not be fair and unbiased unless the Arabs unify their stance and project their strength. Common Arab interests can affect international interests. The current Arab fragmentation adversely affects Arab strength. When we unite our stand, the balance of force may change. [end recording]

Speaker Surur also met with his Lebanese counterpart Nabih Birri. Our correspondent at the Chamber of Deputies Sa'd Ilyas reports.

[Begin Ilyas recording] Speaker Surur said at the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies that the Israeli aggression against Lebanon violated the resolutions of the Sharm al-Shaykh summit that Egypt hosted. He stressed that halting the aggression and implementing Security Council resolution 425 is an essential step toward achieving peace.

Surur arrived at the Chamber of Deputies at 1100 today and was received by Speaker Birri. A meeting was held between the Egyptian and Lebanese delegations. Attending the talks on the Lebanese side were speaker Birri and members of the Chamber of Deputies Bureau. Surur and his accompanying delegation attended the meeting on the Egyptian side. After the talks, which lasted until 1300, Speaker Surur held a news conference at the Chamber of Deputies. Speaker Birri attended the news conference. Surur stressed that Egypt's condemnation of the Israeli aggression was firm, noting that a People's Assembly delegation refused to visit Israel to

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return an Israeli Knesset delegation's visit as part of the dialogue of peace. Surur called on Israel to realize that its continued aggression will not bring about the peace and normalization of ties that it desires. He noted that failure to implement the Security Council resolutions means that resistance will continue. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Receives Call From President Clinton

NC0905055096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] All developments will be discussed by President Ilyas al-Hirawi, Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, who has returned from Italy.

Last night, Prime Minister al-Hariri received a call from U.S. President Bill Clinton. The conversation focused on bilateral ties and the need to promote them.

In statements after meeting Italian officials, al-Hariri called for holding a second Madrid conference. He emphasized that the peace process should not be replaced by the [Lebanese-Israeli] understanding and that the committee's meeting tomorrow will resolve most of the differences.

Lebanon: Al-Hirawi Briefs Deputies on U.S. Trip, Comments

NC0905094396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0905 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Deputies say that President Ilyas al-Hirawi is cautiously optimistic about the future. The president has emphasized that solidarity and national unity are the sharpest weapons to confront what is being hatched against Lebanon.

The deputies praised the president's daring political speech at the United Nations and during his meeting with the U.S. President.

President al-Hirawi said Lebanon's voice would not have had this impact had it not been for the national unity that was evident during the predicament. President al-Hirawi emphasized that contacts with the countries that stood by Lebanon must be pursued in the future. He praised these countries and UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali's courageous stand. [passage omitted]

President al-Hirawi briefed the 30 deputies whom he met today on the outcome of his visit to the United Nations and his meeting with President Clinton.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Hopes U.S. Plays 'Honest Broker' Role

NC0805151096 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri held a news conference in Rome. He hoped that the United States will play the role of an honest broker in the peace process. He stressed Lebanon's eagerness for an effective European role in the Middle East, not only economically but politically.

Al-Hariri called for honoring and implementing the April understanding and considering it a temporary arrangement to resume the peace process.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Holds News Conference in Rome, Returns to Beirut

NC0805164596 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Speaking in Rome today, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said that it is natural to have different views on the formation of a monitoring committee, specially if more than two persons present ideas. He added that he does not see any real problems and expressed his belief that the meeting to be held on Friday [10 May] will resolve all the differences.

Prime Minister al-Hariri stressed that the understanding should not replace the peace process and reiterated that Lebanon will do everything possible to make the understanding that was reached a temporary one and a simple part of the peace process.

The prime minister returned to Beirut from Rome at 1720 today, following his talks with the Italian president and other senior officials.

Al-Hariri held a news conference before leaving Rome in which he spoke about the outcome of his talks and developments in Lebanon and the region.

He reiterated that the Israeli occupation is the real problem and that Hizballah is the result of this occupation. He said that the Israeli killing of civilians will not lead to any results and that resorting to force will not solve the problem. Only withdrawal and implementation of the UN resolutions can solve it, he added.

The prime minister went on to say: What we can do today is to implement the understanding with extreme caution. All the parties should respect it as Lebanon will. He stressed that the only solution is to complete the peace process in the region. He said that Hizballah will voluntarily lay down its arms when the occupation ends.

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Prime Minister al-Hariri praised the U.S. role in stopping the Israeli aggression. He reiterated that we are not looking for an alternative but for cooperation between Europe and the United States to give impetus to the peace process. He expressed hope that the United States will play an honest role. He said that those who prepared for the Madrid-1 conference should prepare for holding the Madrid-2 conference. He added: We are not looking for an alternative but are seeking greater European support for the peace process because Europe is a source of strength for peace.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Returns to Beirut; Further on Rome Remarks

NC0805175996 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri concluded his visit to Italy with a meeting with Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro and returned to Beirut this afternoon. In a statement in Rome, he called for implementing the April Understanding and considering it as a temporary arrangement to facilitate resumption of peace negotiations. He stressed that only a political solution can guarantee a settlement of the security problem in south Lebanon. He said that Israel must withdraw from Lebanese territory and afterwards Hizballah will be disarmed, adding: I do not believe that Hizballah is stronger than the Lebanese Army.

At a news conference after his meeting with President Scalfaro, al-Hariri expressed his hope that Washington will play the role of an honest broker in the peace process. He stressed Lebanon's eagerness for an effective European role in the Middle East.

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Denies 'Secret Annexes' in Understanding

NC0805200796 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an exclusive interview with our correspondent in Rome, Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri has denied that there are any secret annexes in the April Understanding and said that the security committee, which starts its meetings in Washington this week, will not face any difficulties.

[Begin recording] [al-Hariri] I was surprised by reports in some media organs that there are secret annexes in the agreement. This is not true. What is called the April Understanding is the one that was published and made public. There is nothing extra.

[Correspondent] How do you assess the situation now and what steps will be taken soon?

[Al-Hariri] The cease fire is being respected by all parties. The United States and France have presented papers on the monitoring committee. We, Lebanon and Syria, agreed on a joint paper on the monitoring committee. This paper has been sent to the United States and our ambassador there is discussing it with the Americans. We believe that reaching a common solution will not be difficult. [end recording]

Lebanon: Al-Hariri Comments on UN Report, Says Peres Harmed Peace Process

NC0805161396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on the UN report on the Qana massacre, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz said that the report reduced responsibility and was not completely accurate. He called for the publication of the full report.

For his part, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri said from Italy that it proved that Israel destroyed the camp deliberately. He said he does not understand how the Israelis allowed themselves to target a UN center. He noted that he also does not understand this behavior, which will undoubtedly affect the peace process as it is now harming Israel's image.

Prime Minister al-Hariri went on to say that Shim'on Peres is presenting himself as a man of peace but what the Israeli army did was completely the opposite. He added that Peres greatly harmed the peace process, which is regrettable.

Lebanon: Buwayz Views Operation Grapes of Wrath, Peace With Israel

NC0805152796 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1400 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stated that Operation Grapes of Wrath was aimed at driving approximately 300,000 Lebanese toward Beirut to cause chaos, disturb the Lebanese Government, drag it into confrontation with the resistance, and sever links with Syria. He stressed that Lebanon succeeded in making south Lebanon costly to Israel. He noted that the April understanding is a phased arrangement, not an alternative to Security Council Resolution 425.

Buwayz welcomed the French initiative toward Lebanon and said that French President Jacques Chirac has made a de Gaulle-like decision by restoring the French role in Lebanon.

Buwayz denied that there are appendixes to the April understanding. He pointed out that if Israel implements resolution 425 and withdraws from south Lebanon and

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western al-Biqa', this will not mean signing a peace agreement with Israel. He was speaking to newspapers chief editors at a reception hosted by Samih al-Sulh's political saloon.

Lebanon: Hizballah Military Chief Makes 'Rare Public Appearance'

NC0905112096 Paris AFP in English 1018 GMT 9 May 96

[Report by Muntasir 'Abdallah]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iqlim al-Tuffah, Lebanon, May 9 (AFP) — The overall military commander of the Iranian-backed Hizballah made a rare public appearance to show off Katyusha rockets of the type which guerrillas fired on northern Israel last month triggering a 17-day Israeli onslaught on Lebanon.

The weapons and rocket launchers were put on display for the press during the guided visit Wednesday [8 May] of the Iqlim al-Tuffah, a Hizballah stronghold in south Lebanon three kilometers (around two miles) from the Israeli-occupied "security zone."

The commander of Hizballah's armed wing, the Islamic Resistance, refused to reveal his identity, have his picture taken or allow journalists to tape his statements. He met journalists in a glade near the uninhabited village of Jba', emerging from a tent which was concealed under camouflage and guarded by several Hizballah guerrillas.

Bearded, wearing dark glasses, a black beret and brown fatigues and with a pistol in his hip holster, the 35-year-old military chief said: "Hizballah now has the capability to build Katyushas locally and to improve their firepower." Nearby reporters could see a military truck carrying eight Katyusha rocket launchers and further away, concealed under bushes, a Katyusha launching pad with a rocket ready to be fired.

"The resistance is ready to use the Katyushas again against northern Israel if the Zionists violate the April 26, 1996 (ceasefire) understanding," the military commander said.

Under the terms of the US-brokered truce accord ending their 17-day conflict, Israel and Hizballah agreed to spare civilians on either side of the international border.

According to the military commander, Hizballah fired 296 salvos of Katyusha rockets during Israel's Operation Grapes of Wrath on 47 Jewish settlements in northern Israel. Israel launched the air, land and sea offensive on April 11 to stop such attacks on its northern territory. The operation killed more than 170 people, virtually all civilians, while Hizballah reported the deaths of 13 guerrillas.

Lebanon: Hizballah Source Doubts Reports on Israeli Pilot Arad

NC0905050296 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 26 Apr 96 p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on news reports that cited a statement by the Organization of the Oppressed on Earth in which it threatened to execute Israeli pilot Ron Arad, a Hizballah official source said: "If Ron Arad is indeed held by the Organization of the Oppressed it would be better to exchange him with the prisoners and detainees held in the prisons of the Zionist enemy and his agents. But we doubt that such an organization exists."

Lebanon: Fadlallah—April Understanding Will Not Restrict Resistance

NC0805172096 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Allamah Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said that U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's statement that there are secret appendixes to the April understanding is a media ploy and a further support for the Israeli prime minister's election propaganda campaign. Fadalallah ruled out that the April understanding will restrict resistance action.

Lebanon: Hizballah's Qasim—U.S., Israel Procrastinate on Accord

NC0805144396 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah Deputy Secretary General Shaykh Na'im Qasim has stated that the formation of the monitoring committee may take weeks. He said that the U.S and Israeli procrastination is an attempt to win what they failed to win in the war. He stressed that the committee's role will be technical and procedural and nothing more. He reasserted Hizballah's commitment to the substance of the April understanding in toto saying that its violation is up to the Israelis and international circumstances. He said that no one has any interest in violating the cease-fire. He called for monitoring any U.S. move.

Qasim made this statement during a reception that Mufti Shaykh Muhammad Rashid Qabbani held for a Hizballah delegation that included Shaykh Qasim, Deputy Muhammad Barjawi, and other personalities. Qasim stressed that the visit provided an opportunity to discuss the results of the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

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Lebanon: 2 SLA Soldiers Wounded in Roadside Bomb Explosion

TA0905074796 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0700 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Two SLA [South Lebanese Army] soldiers were wounded, one seriously and another lightly, when a roadside bomb exploded in the security zone in south Lebanon. This is reported by our correspondent Ilan Ro'e.

Lebanon: Israeli Shelling, Mock Raids, 'Resistance' Attack Reported

NC0905084496 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Jabal al-Rafi', the woods of al-Wazzani, and al-Wadi al-Akhdar in Iqlim al-Tuffah came under artillery fire at 0900 [0600 GMT] today. Some 15 120-mm and 155-mm shells landed in these areas. The source of shelling was the enemy positions in al-'Ayshiyah and al-Zaffatah. Columns of smoke were seen rising over the bombarded areas.

At 0830 today, Israeli military aircraft flew at low altitude over the western and central sectors. Flights by enemy reconnaissance aircraft were reported over the Tyre area at midnight last night. The flights continued until dawn.

In retaliation for the Israeli acts of aggression, the resistance said in a statement in Beirut today that it detonated an explosive charge as an agents' [South Lebanese Army, SLA] patrol passed on the al-Dabshah-al-Tuhrah Road. The resistance added that several casualties were inflicted on the targeted patrol.

At 1000 today, Israeli military aircraft conducted successive mock raids, dropping thermal balloons over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah.

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Syria: AL-BA'TH Reacts to Christopher's Remarks

JN0905080796 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0455 GMT 9 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] The newspaper AL-BA'TH today writes on some remarks on the Middle East, the peace process, and Syria's stand toward this process. AL-BA'TH comments on U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's remarks on the peace process, stressing that concern about the peace process necessitates that the international mediator in this process should not launch media campaigns on television and in newspapers.

AL-BA'TH says: The mediator should be honest and abide by the bases which where set for this mediation and by the objective set for the mediation's subject.

AL-BA'TH adds: When the mediator relinquishes these bases, his mediation loses the element of honesty and credibility, and, consequently, it turns into attempts to use this mediation in order to make gains for one party at the expense of the other parties and the agreed-upon bases of international legitimacy.

AL-BA'TH says: When Syria accepted the peace process, it accepted it because the peace option is an old Syrian option, and not a transient one. Syria has the right to be suspicious about Israel's intentions, especially since Israel's history, wars, aggressions, ambitions, and continuous defiance of international legitimacy justify these suspicions.

AL-BA'TH numerates some of the aggressive Israeli actions which conflict with international legitimacy. It says: What counts in the peace process are deeds not words. This is why we are suspicious about Israel's intentions, what it has done, and what it is doing against the peace process.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: At any rate, Syria has always been positive about the peace process, and cooperated sincerely with the United States and other states to make it achieve its aspired objective. It also considered the statements made by President Bill Clinton on the U.S. Administration's commitment to a just and comprehensive peace as important. He was personally acquainted with Syria's seriousness about working to achieve the objective of the peace process. Those who do not want just and comprehensive peace to be established in the region are the same people who seek to foil the peace talks and to harm U.S.-Syrian relations. Any harm to these relations will not be in the interest of the peace process or in the realization of a just and comprehensive peace in the region to defuse tension, end bloody conflicts, and achieve security and stability for all sides.

Syria: U.S. 'Bias' Toward Israel Said To Create 'Frustration'

JN0805154096 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1138 GMT 8 May 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The Israeli aggression against Lebanon — and the killing, destruction, and crimes that were committed against humanity in this aggression — put the region and the peace process at a crossroad. Israel, and those supporting it, proved through this aggression and the ensuing military agreements between Israel and the United States that it does not want a just and comprehensive peace. On the contrary, it seeks to impose its hegemony and control over the region. It is common knowledge that Israel sought through its aggression to strike against the Lebanese national resistance and browbeat the Arab countries and people to accept the Israeli peace.

Everybody knows that Israel would not have been able to carry out this aggression without the unqualified support of the United States and the absence of a united Arab stand. The peace that Israel wants to establish in the region is not a just one that achieves security and stability for all. It is the peace of power and hegemony. Regrettably, the United States supported Israel's aggression against Lebanon and did not use its influence to hinder the aggression and push the peace process in the right direction. If the U.S. efforts to stop the aggression and help Peres wash his hands of the blood of children had been employed to ensure the success of the peace process, the region would not be locked in the current tragic situation. This situation is the result of the Israeli aggression and the feeling of frustration generated by the U.S. bias toward the aggressor.

Peace in the Middle East can be achieved by returning to the international legitimacy and its resolutions, the U.S. initiative based on land-for-peace, and the Madrid conference and its foundations. It cannot be achieved by providing Israel with state of the art weapons. The weapons Israel has been stockpiling made it believe that it could launch an aggression and determine its time, place, and scope; ignore the rights of others and the international legitimacy; and impose its own peace.

It can be said that the absence of Arab and international deterrence to the Israeli aggression means, among other things, encouraging and allowing the aggression to exceed all boundaries. The latest events in the region

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have proved that, to Israel, peace does not mean searching for stability and development and improving the quality of life. It sought and is still seeking to better its military might and pose a threat to the region at all times, particularly in the absence of a balance of power.

Israel's penetration of the Arab ranks through the agreements it has signed with some Arabs and the Arab doors through which it has stepped were the preamble for its aggression against Lebanon and Arabs everywhere. This necessitates an Arab awakening, though belated, because the danger threatens everyone.

Syria, which adopted peace as a strategic option, calls on the entire international community to support the process of a just and comprehensive peace and exercise the necessary pressure against Israel to force it to halt its aggression and accept the international legitimacy and its resolutions as a basis for the aspired peace. Syria calls on the Arabs to seriously consider the danger posed by the Israeli concept of peace and its open aggression against Arabs and Arab land. To this end, efforts should be pooled, stands should be unified, and Arab capabilities should be mobilized to form a sort of balance in the region. Balance is the groundwork of a just peace. The international community, on the other hand, must make a real and more active effort to establish peace in the region on the basis of respect for UN credibility and the UN resolutions. All active forces should adhere to a balanced standard to save the peace process and the region from the state of war and threats, not only to the region, but also to international security and peace.

Syria: AL-THAWRAH Calls For Punishing 'Israeli War Criminals'

JN0905085596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0450 GMT 9 May 96

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The International Justice," AL-THAWRAH comments on the United Nations' report on the Qana massacre and reactions to it.

AL-THAWRAH says: The Qana massacre was not an ordinary operation or a mere miscalculation, but it embodied an approach of systematic terrorism adopted by Israel for many years.

AL-THAWRAH stresses: It was very regrettable that Washington objected to publishing the report and pressured the United Nations to force it to drop the issue and to exonerate Israel of its responsibility for shedding innocent blood in Qana. Of course, this stand is not in harmony with the United States' moral and political responsibilities in the international arena. It is also not in the interest of peace and stability in the Middle East.

AL-THAWRAH adds: At any rate, the publishing of the report revealed the truth to the international community and clearly showed how hideous was the crime perpetrated by Israel, not only against children and women, but also against the United Nations itself. Israel had no respect for the sanctity of these positions, and premeditatedly killed tens of innocent people in a serious precedent which requires a deterrent punishment. This crime must not be disregarded under any circumstances.

AL-THAWRAH calls on the United Nations to take deterrent measures against Israel, and to protect its reputation and prestige.

Concluding, the paper says: The United Nations should deal with the Qana crime in the same way it dealt with similar crimes perpetrated by the Bosnian Serbs. Just as the Serb criminals are being tried, the Israeli war criminals should face international justice to be punished.

Syria: DPRK Official Arrives With 'Further Support' for al-Asad

JN0905065996 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kim Yong-nam, DPRK deputy chairman of the executive council and minister of foreign affairs [first title as heard], arrived in Damascus last night on an official three-day visit to Syria.

He was received upon arrival at Damascus International Airport by Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', senior Foreign Ministry officials, DPRK Ambassador in Damascus Chong Chun-kun, and the embassy staff.

In a statement to the SYRIAN ARAB NEWS AGENCY, Kim Yong-nam expressed his country's support for Syria's stand toward the recent brutal Israeli aggression against Lebanon.

He said: The objective of my visit to Syria is to express further support for President Hafiz al-Asad's stands during the brutal aggression Israel recently launched against southern Lebanon.

The DPRK foreign minister added that his country denounced the Israeli aggression against southern Lebanon, which was a natural outcome of the Sharm al-Shaykh summit. He said that the world public opinion does not only sympathize with and understand Syria's stands, but it also expresses solidarity with and support for these stands.

The DPRK foreign minister said that despite the complicated international circumstances, Syria and the DPRK

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have continued to promote distinguished relations of friendship between them. He pointed out that during the visit, he will discuss means of expanding bilateral co-operation. He added: We will exchange viewpoints on international issues of joint interest, including the issue of coordinating stands at international forums, such as the Nonaligned Movement.

Syria: Talks Between al-Asad, al-Hirawi Said New 'Milestone'

JN0805122096 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English 6 May 96 p 5

[Commentary by M. Agha: "Syria-Lebanon Ties"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The talks between President Hafiz al-Asad and Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi are a new milestone in the brotherly relations between the two countries. These talks constitute a historic event for they come in the aftermath of very serious developments in the region in general and in Lebanon in particular.

The summit meeting came first of all, after "operation Grapes of Wrath" in which the Israeli occupation troops perpetrated most brutal crimes against the Lebanese civilians, and after the April understanding which proved that Israel's aggression has come to an end without reaping any political fruits, or even military gains.

The Israeli major target to destroy resistance was a fiasco and confrontation has given further evidence that most-up-to-date weapons are not able to kill the will of freedom fighters.

The brotherly relations between Syria and Lebanon are baptized with blood and united political position.

The intensive efforts exerted by President al-Asad have led to reaching an honourable accord that maintained the legitimate right of the Lebanese Resistance Movement to confront the Israeli aggressions.

Recent developments have proved anew that Syria's principled attitudes remain the bright sun that unveils all lies and capitulatory stands taken by others towards the national issues of destiny.

Syria, whatever the circumstances and risks, remains honest to her national ideology and attitudes. She has always shared with the brotherly people of Lebanon their calamities and has always healed Lebanon's wounds.

Others cannot afford to deny the deep-rooted ties that bind Lebanon and Syria. These bonds are stronger then any aggression or crime.

Syria and Lebanon, meanwhile, are keen to reach a just and comprehensive peace settlement on the basis of UN resolutions 242, 338 and 425. Their faith in the justice of the Arab nation's cause is unswerving and their determination to liberate their occupied territories is unlimited.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: High Coordination Council 'Seriously Considering' Talks

LD0805174596 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The High Coordination Council [HCC] has seriously taken into consideration the issue of talks with the government. This point was expressed in an interview with a responsible source of Hezb-e Eslami Afghanistan. He described as unfounded the rumors concerning the supposed entry of the Hezb's armed forces into Kabul and about an urgent plan by the Hezb's amir to go to Kabul. The source added that the reality was that neither have the Hezb's armed forces entered Kabul nor is there any urgent plan for Brother Hekmatyar to go to Kabul. The source added that the HCC is seriously considering the issue of talks. He said it is hoped that they will take a united and joint stance on the matter.

Afghanistan: Rabbani Stresses Finding Conflict Solution Through Talks

LD0805192096 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani this morning met Mahmoud Mestiri, special envoy of the UN secretary general.

The presidential press office reported to BAKHTAR that during this meeting Mahmoud Mestiri briefed the president on UN efforts to restore peace and on the results of his talks with the relevant parties.

President Rabbani then said: We are in favor of finding a solution to the problems through talks. In this respect the Islamic State of Afghanistan [ISA] has taken wide-ranging steps and actual effective measures.

Rabbani added: The ISA supports the UN efforts and is ready to cooperate with the United Nations. We want an acceleration of efforts which take into account the realities of our Islamic society. We hope that the inter-Afghan dialogue, being the essential core of the consolidation of peace in our country, is being further strengthened through the participation of relevant groups and forces. In this respect the United Nations can speed up its efforts.

Also present at this meeting were esteemed Dr. Najibollah Lafra'i, minister of state for foreign affairs, and esteemed Abdol Aziz Morad, head of the presidential press office and presidential secretary.

Afghanistan: Ex-President Mojaddedi Views Current Situation

LD0805220396 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Hazrat Sebghatollah Mojaddedi has said in an interview with a Pakistani newspaper that the Taleban group is formed by Afghans but they also include ex-communists. He said: Accepting Rabbani as a president even for one more day is tantamount to legitimizing all his ruthless and illegal acts.

He added: Only the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan can end our country's current problems. The esteemed Mojaddedi said: Hezb-e Eslami is one of the member parties of the High Coordination Council. It can hold talks with Rabbani's government. However, it does not have the right of concluding a final settlement with the administration.

Answering a question he said: Pakistan is not happy about the Hekmatyar-Rabbani understanding. Probably, Pakistan wants to overthrow Rabbani's government and replace it with the Taleban's. However, by doing so, the situation in Afghanistan will further deteriorate. America also supported the Taleban but now it does not like them.

On the real identity of the Taleban, Hazrat Mojaddedi said: The Taleban are an Afghan group which has ex-communists in its ranks. The fact of the matter is that Russia still has considerable influence in Afghanistan. Ahmad Shah Mas'ud has had warm relations with the Russians since the jihad days, and the Russians are giving him financial and military assistance in order to prolong the fighting in Afghanistan and to destroy the achievement of jihad and to convince the people that [words indistinct] and Najib's time was very much better than the current situation.

About Taleban's refusal to participate in a council he said: The Taleban only want themselves and do not recognize the other organizations. This party has emerged on the basis of Pashtun nationalism which threatens the national unity of Afghanistan.

The leader of Jabaha-e Najat-e Mili said: America had little interest in Afghan problems, but due to increasing interference in Afghanistan by Russia and Iran, America is now showing more interest in the Afghan problem. Its purpose might well be to achieve a peace and security in Afghanistan that conforms to its wishes.

He added: The current crisis in our country cannot be resolved through a Rabbani-Hekmatyar agreement. Rabbani must resign and all parties including Dostam and

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Taleban must participate in talks under a comprehensive plan to form a broad-based government.

He said: It is unfortunate that the Taleban have insufficient administrative experience and punish people under the pretext of enforcing Sharia Hoddud [punishments prescribed by the Koran] in the areas under their control. In some places they imprison those who shave their beards. An Islamic government cannot be established in this manner. When they became powerful, their leader called himself Amir al-Momening [leader of the people of faith] and declared the others rebels.

Mojaddedi said: The Afghan crisis became more complicated after the Islamabad agreement, because the presidency and premiership were both given to extremist parties. One of the offices should have been given to the moderate parties.

He said: He is ashamed of introducing himself as a jihadi leader. Because he did not trust Mas'ud, Hekmatyar refused to go to Kabul after the mojahedin entered the city. Hekmatyar wanted to take his own security people to Kabul but Mas'ud opposed this.

Afghanistan: Iran To Open Consulate in Jalalabad

LD0805193696 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Iran is to open a consulate in Jalalabad city. A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reports from Jalalabad that Gholam Reza Haddadi, the ambassador of Iran to Kabul, held talks with Haji Abdol Qadir, the governor of Nangarhar, over two consecutive days. The governor has instructed provincial officials to find a place for the consulate. The report adds that on 6 May Haji Abdol Qadir gave permission for the opening of an Iranian consulate in Jalalabad. The government of Iran has appointed Reza Bahrami as Iran's first consul in Jalalabad. It should be mentioned that Pakistan's consulate is also temporarily based in Jalalabad.

Afghanistan: Rocket Attacks on Kabul Cause Casualties

LD0805192996 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Rocket attacks have been launched on various parts of Kabul. Reports reaching Radio Message of Freedom said that on 6 May two people were martyred and 15 others injured during a rocket attack on Kabul.

The reports said that seven people were injured near the center of Kabul city and two houses had been destroyed by rockets fired from south of Kabul. The reports said that some other rockets landed in various parts of Kabul.

Government forces in Kabul have blamed the Taleban for the rocket attacks.

India

India: CII President Interviewed

BK0805120396 Delhi BUSINESS STANDARD in English 3 May 96 p 6

[Interview with Shekhar Dutta, president of the Confederation of Indian Industry [CII], by Surajeet Das Gupta and Vivek Law; place and date not given]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Q: You have come out with the CII Vision 2002. Your National Agenda merely mentions some figures. Will you tell us something more about this?

A: What we're looking for is the growth of the Indian economy. We have painted the growth of the Indian economy for 2002 which is the first step towards the CII vision for 2020, by when India should emerge as the fourth largest economy of the world, behind the United States, China and Japan. The Vision 2002 is the stepping stone for achieving that position.

Q: Have you identified any specific areas on which you will lay stress?

A: We have identified a whole gamut of areas. What we're looking for is the government taking the backseat in the running of the economy and leaving the functioning of the economy to market forces. The government must only play the role of the facilitator. The figures that we have outlined in the Vision 2002 are strong and ambitious, but then if we can't attain them, there is no way in which we can achieve Vision 2020, that of being the fourth largest economy in the world.

Q: The CII has called for anti-trust laws. But we did for some time have such a mechanism in the form of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission [MRTPC], but the mechanism never really took off?

A: There is a difference between the MRTPC and the anti-trust body that we are talking of. First of all the Monopoly part in MRTPC is no longer valid. More importantly, in the case of MRTPC, a litigant has to approach the body with a complaint. What we want is that the anti-trust body should itself trigger an action to curb the growth of a monopoly which could harm the consumers.

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Q: So what kind of an anti-trust set up are you looking at?

A: We would prefer to have a quasi judicial body capable of checking mergers and amalgamations that could prove to be detrimental to consumers. We definitely don't want a bureaucratic set up.

Q: Why is the CII suddenly taking up this whole question of an anti-trust body so seriously?

A: We are getting to a stage where mergers and amalgamations are becoming a fact of life. We are not saying that mergers are good or bad. All we are saying is that we have a responsibility to the consumers, and to protect this interest, it is necessary to have an anti-trust body.

Q: What is your stand on the emerging trend of hostile takeovers?

A: We have not yet taken any formal view on this. This is because the cases of hostile bids have been very few. But we do feel that there is now a need to address this issue.

Q: Rather surprisingly, your paper on the national agenda has not really gone into the development of the stock market in detail?

A: No, we have mentioned about the stock market under the heading of the financial sector.

Q: But all that your paper talks of is certain amendments in a particular section of the Companies Act and allowing buy back of shares. It is completely silent on the development of the capital market. Considering that the growth of the industry is going to he largely dependent on the capital market, don't you feel that the CII should have laid more stress on its development?

A: Well, we have collected enough data on the development of the capital markets. We couldn't address all the issues in detail but we agree that the setting up of a depository could have found a mention. But we must understand one thing that we have to move step by step towards the development of the capital market.

Q: There has been a debate about the extent to which multinationals should be allowed take an equity in an Indian venture. What are your comments on this?

A: What we are asking for is a clear cut policy. We must have one policy for one industry. For example, if the government wants to allow 100 per cent in the consumer goods sector let it do so, but then let it also say it upfront so that everyone is in the know. You can't go and do it on a case-by-case basis.

Q: What are your views on equity caps?

A: First, all that we want to make it clear is that the CII has not asked for any equity caps. Already, the government has placed caps on certain sectors and the onus for deciding on this is with it. We want common rules for everyone. You can't allow one person a certain equity stake while denying the other the same, within the same industry.

Q: What is your stand on the government allowing multinationals to come and set up 100 percent subsidiaries?

A: If the government decides that allowing 100 per cent is the way to go, so be it. We might have different views but every country has its rules and regulations in this regard and it is for the government to frame these rules. We have not taken a view on the matter yet, but then the government has not sought our views on the subject yet.

Q: But why are you leaving such an important issue like this to the government and not coming out with a stand on this issue? You have after all given your views on various subjects on which the government has not sought your views?

A: Where the permission has already been given, we cannot do anything. In certain areas like Telecom, we have given our views. But we must not forget that the government will not take a stand without taking the views of the industry chambers.

Q: Precisely, so what is your stand going to be when your views are sought?

A. The view that CII takes would have to be debated at the steering committee. We are yet to debate the issue at the steering committee.

Q: You have given a call for a total freeze on government recruitment. But, at the same time, you are stressing the need for creating more jobs in certain categories?

A: What we are really asking for is a total cut in the government itself. We want less of government. The industry should be allowed to govern itself and freezing new jobs will not only achieve this but also add an additional Rs [rupees] 1500 crore to the economy.

Q: What are your views on defense expenditure. It is estimated that the new government might have to spend close to Rs 15,000 crore on this sector?

A: We are not going to compromise on the defense of the country. Defences expenditure has to be incurred and, we should therefore, look at cutting expenditure elsewhere. We would like to participate, and have in this regard recently held talks with the Army chief and nearly 200 other senior defense officials.

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Q: Several small and medium enterprises have raised the issue of foreign multinationals bringing in second hand machinery for their projects in India. What is the CII's view on this?

A: Well, we can't only blame the MNCs [multinational corporations] for bringing in the second hand machinery as there are two partners involved. But on a macro level, we must raise the question that do we need MNCs, who, despite considering the Indian market as a strong base for them, prefer to bring in second hand machinery into the country. We are raising the matter with both the partners, for if an MNC does resort to this it is not good for its image as well.

Q: Are you considering extending membership to the trading community?

A: No, we are not considering bringing the trading community within our fold and there has been no debate on this issue as well.

Q: CII has posted a good financial performance in 1996-97 where you have recorded a surplus income. What are your growth plans?

A: We are going to expand not only by increasing our interaction with the government but also undertake visits abroad to invite foreign investors to India. Several high level delegations to the US, UK and China have already been planned. We want to promote CII as the voice of India on the non govt side.

Q: But growth also brings with it problems and CII has had a fair share of them in the very recent past when senior leaders have expressed views that are contradictory to those of the organisation. How do you plan to tackle this problem?

A: You have raised a very valid but at the same time a very ticklish point. We have to rely on the maturity of the organisation and look up to the senior members of the steering committee to play an important role in finding a common thread. Yes, it is true that after the National Council meeting several senior members did come out with different views. At the same time we can't muffle anyone's voice. But it is a difficult task and I have no readymade solution for this.

India: Official Comments on Kashmir Election Situation

BK0805152696 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1215 GMT 8 May 96

[Interview With Election Commissioner G.V. Krishnamurthy by Prannoy Roy in special election results program "India Votes '96" — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Prannoy Roy] Could you quickly tell us about the precautions, preventive measures, and other steps taken for J and K [Jammu and Kashmir] elections.

[Krishnamurthy] I must thank you for this question. Jammu and Kashmir has been a matter of international focus from the date of accession in 1947. It has been the stand of our neighboring country and some interested countries that it is not a part of India, it doesn't want to continue as part of India, that it is forced to be a part of the national [word indistinct].

[Prannoy Roy] Yes, that has been the background for this entire thing, but what are the steps that you have taken for the elections?

[Krishnamurthy] Now we have announced the elections as is ordained by the Constitution to hold elections in the whole country. The fact is that 183 nominations were filed.

[Prannoy Roy] One hundred and eighty three?

[Krishnamurthy] One hundred and eighty three from Jammu, Srinagar, Anantnag, Baramula, Ladakh, Udhampur. Out of which 110 candidates are contesting. This shows that both the candidates and the people want to participate in the electoral process as integral part of the nation and there remains a (?stream) of nationalism. They also want that their members of parliament should sit in the parliament for (?them).

[Prannoy Roy] Now, what are the steps which you have taken? What are the arrangements, which are different from the normal steps?

[Krishnamurthy] I am ready to mention about the steps we have taken. We have done a tremendous exercise in interacting with the security agencies in regard to the law and order situation. We are aware for the last seven years there were no elections. So, what will we do, what we should try to find out? How best we can organize the elections, creating confidence in the people? A confidence building exercise has been on for the last one year onwards. Secondly, we tried to seal the border from where infiltrators were being entering into the state of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly in the valley and Doda and indulging in violence, indiscriminate killing,

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looting property, burning houses, threatening people, forcing people of the state in most [words indistinct]. Such an exercise we took, but there was an interaction with political parties. They were fed up with militants. I had discussions with the people in Jammu and Kashmir — with the governor, with the chief secretary, with the people in Ladakh, with the people in Jammu, people in Srinagar. They have said now we want democracy. The very fact that 80 percent [word indistinct], turnout was 75 percent in Ladakh and Jammu. In spite of this fact, firing and shelling have been going on since yesterday from morning to 0700 in evening. Our reports says in Jammu 55 to 60 percent has gone to polls. It is amazing.

[Prannoy Roy] Thank you very much. So in a nutshell, elections will be held. They will not be postponed.

[Krishnamurthy] I am an optimistic and optimism is essential for a nation which aspires for going to future [words indistinct].

[Prannoy Roy] Well sir, your presence has been of pleasure to us. Thank you very much for being here.

[Krishnamurthy] I am sure that the [Kashmir] situation will improve when democracy takes it central [word indistinct] and is strengthened [words indistinct] in its glory and prosperity.

[Prannoy Roy] Thank you very much. Thank you very much.

India: Radio Gives Poll Trends; Congress Leads in 38 Seats

BK0805135796 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress is reported to be leading in 38 Lok Sabha constituencies out of 82 for which trends are available. The BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] candidates were ahead in 15 constituencies and the Janata Dal in 11. Among the Congress candidates who have established leads over their rivals are: the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao; the Information and broadcasting minister, Mr. P.A. Sangma; and the ministers of state, Mr. K.P. Singhdeo and Mr. P.M. Sayeed. The BJP candidates who are leading include the Gujarat unit president, Mr. Kanshiram Rana. Those who are trailing include former union minister Mr. B. Shankaranand and former chief minister of Sikkim Mr. Nar Bahadur Bhandari. Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao was leading by about 7,700 votes in Nandyal Lok Sabha constituency in Andhra Pradesh after the first round of counting in three assembly segments. The former chief minister of the state, Mr. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy, was ahead by 14,000 votes over his nearest TDP [Telugu Desam Party] rival, Mr. S.V. Subba Reddy, in Kurnool. The former union minister, Mr. Kamaluddin Ahmad, of the Congress was leading in Hanamkonda.

In Rajasthan, Mr. Nathuram Mirdha also of Congress was leading by over 48,000 votes over the BJP candidate, Mr. Harish Chand Kumawat, after the first round in Nagaur. The Congress nominee, Ms. Usha Meena, was ahead in Sawai-Madhopur.

Some more trends from Karnataka have come in. The former union minister, Dr. B. Shankaranand, of the Congress is trailing behind his Janata Dal rival by a huge margin of 30,000 votes in Chikkodi reserve constituency. In Shimoga, the former chief minister, Mr. S. Bangarappa, of the Karnataka Congress Party has established a lead of 15,000 votes over his BJP rival. In Hassan constituency, Mr. Rudesh Gowda of the Janata Dal is leading over his nearest Congress rival by a margin of 21,000 votes. The Congress-I candidate is also leading in Raichur constituency. In Mandya, Mr. Madhe Gowda of the Congress is trailing behind his Janata Dal rival by 4,000 votes. The sitting MP of Koppal, Mr. Basavaraj Patil, of the Congress is trailing behind his Janata Dal rival.

In Punjab, the union minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia, of the Congress is leading over his BJP opponent, Dr. Baldev Raj Chawla, by over 1,000 votes after the first round of counting in Amritsar constituency. The sitting MP, Mr. Umrao Singh, also of the Congress was leading by 7,280 votes over is nearest BJP rival after the first round of counting in Jullundur constituency. In Rupar, the Akali Dal-Badal candidate, Mr. Basant Singh, was ahead of his Congress rival by 1,600 votes after the first round.

In Kerala, the sitting MP and UDF [United Democratic Front] candidate, Mr. P.C. Thomas was leading over his LDF [Left Democratic Front] supported candidate Mr. Baby Kurien in Moowattupuzha constituency after the first round of counting.

In the lone constituency in Dadra and Nagar Haveli, the Congress candidate is leading.

In the union territory of Chandigarh, Mr. Pawan Kumar Bansal of the Congress is trailing behind his nearest BJP rival Mr. Satyapal Jain by about 1,000 votes.

Four assembly results have come in from Pondicherry. The Congress has bagged two, and the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] and Janata Dal one each. Prominent among the losers include the former chief minister, Mr. D. Ramachandran. The PWD [Public Works Department] minister and the Congress candidate, Mr. C.M. Ashraf, has won the Bussy assembly seat.

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In Haryana, Mr. Jaiprakash of the Haryana Vikas Party is leading over his Congress rival, Mr. Randeep Singh in Narwana assembly constituency. Former chief minister, Mr. Om Prakash Chautala of the Samata Party, is in the third place.

In Tamil Nadu, the DMK president, Mr. Karunanidhi, is leading by 4,400 votes against his Congress rival in Chepauk assembly constituency. Counting in Bargur constituency where the chief minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, is contesting has not yet started.

In the Meghalaya assembly by-election, the Congress has wrested the Laitumkhrah seat from the regional party, the Hill People's Union. The party nominee, Mr. P.G. Marbaniang, has been declared elected by a margin of 3,000 votes.

India: Former Minister Asks Rao To Quit as Congress Chief

BK0805132496 Hong Kong AFP in English 1241 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] BANGALORE, India, May 8 (AFP) — A former cabinet minister on Wednesday [8 May] urged Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao to resign as president of the ruling Congress (I) party which faces an election rout.

C.K. Jaffer Sharief also suggested in this southern city that Rao be succeeded by Sonia Gandhi, widow of former prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was assassinated during the last general elections in 1991.

Sharief was the second Congress leader in two days to demand the Italian-born Sonia Gandhi's intervention in party affairs in what was seen as a growing disaffection with Rao.

Sharief's demand came a day after an exit poll on state-run television showed that Hindu nationalists and their allies would finish as the largest group in parliament from general elections which concluded Tuesday.

The survey put the Congress at a distant second, followed closely by a centrist-leftist alliance.

"Rao has totally failed to manage the affairs of the party," Sharief told reporters. "The party is in disarray and many stalwarts are out of the party or have been drive out, leaving the rank and file demoralised.

"The time has come for all Congressmen to ponder over the developments of the past five years and think of the difficult future the party is facing," he said. "During the past five years, the party has been totally decimated."

Rao became the Congress chief and prime minister after Sonia Gandhi declined to take over the party presidency.

"There is no doubt that he (Rao) will have to take the credit or blame for winning or losing the election for the Congress," Sharief said. "He should step down and accept the verdict of the people."

Sharief is the fourth Congress politician to come out openly against Rao in the past week, indicating fresh turmoil in the 111-year-old party.

India: Minister Mukherjee Views Election Trends

BK0805165296 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1415 GMT 8 May 96

[Interview with External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee by Rajiv Sirdesai and Prannoy Roy in special election results program "India Vote" held in New Delhi — live]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] [Roy] Let us go straight across to the Congress headquarters with Rajiv Sirdesai. What is the mood there like, Rajiv?

[Sirdesai] Prannoy, somehow Congressmen don't seem to have any faith in [word indistinct]. You can say what you want that the Congress is doing badly, but the people here, the Congressmen here, somehow seem to be clinging on to the hope that will form a majority or it may be even at least be the single largest party. I have with me here, Dr. Pranab Mukherjee, who is heading the Congress' campaign committee. Dr. Mukherjee, is it now very clear that the Congress cannot form a majority and will have to look for a coalition if at all it is to remain in power?

[Mukherjee] So far the trends are concerned, it is quite clear that we are not in a position to have the majority. So far the coalition is concerned, to a considerable extent it would depend on the number and more so, the coalition cannot be just as because of two groups [words indistinct] There must be certain program and it would be decided ultimately by the appropriate forum. But, it is just too early to make any comment about the coalition.

[Sirdesai] But, you heard Mr. Prakash Karat say that it will have to be a fundamental realignment of forces of possible nonCongress coalition with/without Mr. Rao there as their leader. So, is that a real possibility now, you think?

[Mukherjee] It is just placing the cart before the horse. So far the Congress party is concerned, as per the practice, Congress Parliamentary Party is to elect its own leader and surely they are not going to be guided by the advice from outside.

[Sirdesai] But, Dr. Mukherjee, would you agree that this election, because you are in charge of the campaign,

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or essentially a referendum on the performance of Narasimha Rao's government and his leadership. So if you don't get a majority, will it not be a reflection on his leadership?

[Mukherjee] Of course in every parliamentary election, not only in India, everywhere, leader holds the responsibility because he is the chief campaigner. But, I would not like to pass any judgment till the final results are available. The tread figure available, of course we are losing as from the figures appear. So far the trends are concerned, we are losing every one seat out of three.

[Sirdesai] Would you say because Narasimha Rao lacks the necessary charisma of Congress leader?

[Mukherjee] I would not like to say so because, however, we have not been able to convey the message of stability on which we depended considerably. Therefore, so far the question of stability is concerned, we have not be able to carry conviction with the electorate. But, I don't buy with the theory that economic policies have been rejected.

[Sirdesai] Firstly, here it is very clear that what has happened in the last five years is not being accepted by voters across the country, but there is fragmentation and the Congress vote is receding.

[Mukherjee] Of course, so far the trends are concerned, Congress vote is receding. But, why it is receding? I don't think that we should rush to any simplistic conclusion. We shall have to wait. The fact remains that there has been voting on the pattern of community or to some extent on the caste (?lines), while the major political and economic issues were subservient.

[Sirdesai] One last quick question. Why is it that the Congress in states where it had a state government is doing badly, while the Janata Dal, like in Karnataka, is doing well?

[Mukherjee] You, you cannot just do [interrupted]

[Sirdesai] Incumbency factors that have been [interrupted]

[Mukherjee] (?No), that type of simplicity is not possible. Orissa trend is quite good. Himachal trend is quite good. On the other hand, in Haryana and Punjab it is not so well. Similarly, where we are not in government there [results] also have been bad.

[Sirdesai] Prannoy, the major thing that we have now got from Dr. Mukherjee is that Congress, he accepts, will not [have] a majority. I think that is a major admission on his part. Over to you, Prannoy.

[Roy] Can I just ask him a question?

[Sirdesai] Yes, sure, sure, please, yes.

[Roy] Mr. Mukherjee, in 1989 the Congress got 197 seats and Rajiv Gandhi did not stake claim to form a government. Are you going to follow that precedent or you are going to change that?

[Mukherjee] So far the formation of the government is concerned, after all, the party will have to take a decision and surely the Congress parliamentary party will take into account various factors. And, so far Congress is concerned, in its long history it has followed the normal democratic practice.

[Roy] Which means, you will not stake a claim to form a government if you get under say 200 seats?

[Mukherjee] It is difficult to say right now, but I can say that no decision has been taken and it is not the time to practise it.

[Roy] What about your personal view, Mr. Mukherjee? At what point should the Congress, you think, try and form a government?

[Mukherjee] Ah, surely, if it is possible, [that] probability is to be taken into account.

[Roy] Regardless of the numbers? It could be [interrupted]

[Mukherjee] No, number is an important factor and that can lead to probability. Without number you can't have probability.

[Roy] Sir, are we entering the numbers game now? That is to state [interrupted]

[Mukherjee] No, I am not entering into the number game. What I am talking of that various aspects have to be taken note of while taking a decision. Somebody may claim, and I can assure you Congress is not an adventurist party. Therefore, a decision will have to be taken in view of various factors and surely all aspects will be taken note of.

[Roy] Thank you very much indeed. Thank you very much.

India: Senior Congress Leader Admits Loss of Majority

BK0805150796 Hong Kong AFP in English 1439 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] NEW DELHI, May 8 (AFP) — A senior leader of India's ruling Congress (I) party acknowledged Wednesday [8 May] that it would not secure a parliamentary majority from general elections which ended on Tuesday.

"It's clear we are not in a position to have a majority," Foreign Minister Pranab Mukherjee, chairman of the

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Congress campaign committee, told state-run television as partial results showed the ruling party trailing its rivals.

Mukherjee was the first senior leader of the party to acknowledge that the Congress party of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao would be unable to secure a majority in parliament.

Asked whether the Congress would consider joining a coalition government, Mukherjee said: "It's too early to make a comment about a coalition. Such a decision will have to be taken in view of various factors."

An exit poll carried out by state-run television projected only 142 seats for the Congress in the 545-member lower house and nearly 200 seats for its main rival, the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (Indian People's Party).

Indin: Delhi Updates Elections Results; Rao Leading in 2 Places

BK0905004496 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 2335 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Results of 40 Lok Sabha seats are now available. The Indian National Congress has secured 17 followed by the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] with 13. The Janata Dal has won five seats and the Karnataka Congress Party one. Independent and others have emerged winners in four other seats.

Among the prominent winners are the union minister of state, Mr. P.M. Sayeed; the presidents of the Rajasthan and Himachal Pradesh PCC's [Pradesh — state — Congress Committees], Mr. Ashok Gehlot and Mr. Sat Mahajan; and the former deputy speaker of the Lok Sabha, Mr. G.G. Swell. The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, is leading in both the constituencies of Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh and Berhampur in Orissa. The union ministers — Mr. P.A. Sangma, Mr. K.P. Singhdeo, Mr. Giridhar Gomanngo, and Mr. K. S. Bhoi — are also ahead of their rivals.

The former union minister, Mr. B. Shankaranand, and the AICC [All India Congress Committee] general secretary, Janardhana Poojary; the Karnataka PCC president, Mr. D.K. Naikar; and the former union minister, Mr. P.K. Thongan, have been defeated.

In Rajasthan, 14 results have been declared. The Congress and the BJP have got seven seats each. From Karnataka, 10 results are available. The Janata Dal has bagged five seats and the Congress and the BJP have won two seats each. The Karnataka Congress Party has opened its account with its president Mr. S. Bangarappa emerging a winner. The Congress and the BJP have won four seats each in Gujarat so far. In Arunachal Pradesh, both the seats have gone to independents.

In Goa, the lone seat declared so far has gone to the MGP [Maharashtravadi Gomantak Party]. The Congress candidates have been declared elected from one seat each in Himachal Pradesh, Lakshadweep, Daman and Dieu, and Dadra and Nagar Haveli. In Meghalaya, an independent has won one seat.

Trends are also available for 242 seats. The Congress is leading in 70 followed by the BJP in 57. The Janata Dal is leading in seven constituencies, the CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] is ahead in 15 seats, and the CPI in 12.

In Bihar, the BJP and its ally the Samata Party and the Janata Dal are leading in one seat each.

From Delhi, trends are available from four seats. Mrs. Maira Kumar and Mr. J.P. Agarwal, both of the Congress, are leading in the Karol Bagh and Chandni Chowk constituencies. The BJP spokesperson, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, and the former Jammu and Kashmir governor, Mr. Jagmohan, are ahead of their rivals in South Delhi and New Delhi constituencies.

In Himachal Pradesh, Major General Vikram Singh of the Congress has established a lead of over 16,000 votes against the state unit BJP president, Mr. Prem Kumar Dhumal, in Hamirpur. In the Simla constituency, Mr. K.D. Sultanpuri of the Congress is leading by 85,0000 votes against Mr. Virendra Kashyap of the BJP at the end of the counting in 15 segments of the constituency.

In Rajasthan, a sitting member and a former union minister, Mr. Ashok Gehlot, has been elected from Jodhpur. He defeated his nearest BJP rival, Mr. Jaswant Singh by a margin of over 54,300 votes.

In Assam, the first results in the assembly elections has gone to the AGP [Asom Gana Parishad]. The party nominee, Mr. Fanibhushan Chowdhury, has won the Bongaigaon seat by defeating his independent rival, Mr. Chiman Brahma, by nearly 25,000 votes.

Trends for 15 assembly seats from West Bengal are available. The CPI-M is leading in seven and the Indian National Congress and the All India Forward Bloc are ahead in three each and the RSP [Revolutionary Socialist Party] and Forward Bloc-Socialist candidates are ahead of their rivals in in one constituency each.

All the five results for the Tamil Nadu assembly declared so far have been bagged by the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam]. The party chief, Mr. M. Karunanidhi, has been elected from Chepauk and the general secretary, Mr. K. Ambazagan, from the

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(?Varahur) constituency in Madras. According to the trends available so far, the chief minister, Ms. Jayalalitha, and most of her ministerial colleagues are lagging behind.

Twelve assembly results have come in from Pondicherry. The Congress has secured five and the DMK and its ally the TMC [Tamil Nadu Maanila Congress] and the AIADMK [All India Anna DMK] have got two each and one has gone to the Janata Dal. The chief minister Vaithalingam, has won. The former chief minister, Mr. Ramachandran of the AIADMK, has been defeated.

India: Post-Election 'Power Struggle' Within Congress Detailed

BK0905074896 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 8 May 96 p 1

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tamil Maanila Congress [TMC] leader G K Moopanar's 30-minute meeting with Sonia Gandhi late last night has given a new twist to the ongoing, power struggle within the Congress and formation of a non-BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] government at the centre.

The Sonia-Moopanar meeting gives a strong indication that anti-Rao lobby has decided to use the Sonia card in its determined bid to oust Rao from the leadership of the party. The move seemed to have been masterminded by CWC [Congress Working Committee] member and union minister K Karunakaran who is mobilising Rao's detractors within the Congress.

In a related development, another TMC leader P Chidambaram also called on National Front and Left Front leaders last night before leaving for Madras this morning with Moopanar.

To counter these moves Rao loyalists continued to orchestrate support to their beleaguered leader with statements critical of the Rao antagonists from union ministers Sibte Razi and P M Sayeed.

The major chunk of the party's middle-level leadership, including CWC member and union minister Rajesh Pilot and former Kamal Nath, appeared to have adopted the middle path.

They appeared to be waiting for election results before committing themselves to the either of the warring groups.

Moopanar called on Karunakaran immediately after reaching Delhi last night before he drove to 10 Janpath [Sonia Gandhi's address]. He again visited the wily Kerela leader after meeting Sonia to brief him about the discussions.

No authentic version of the Sonia-Moopanar meeting was available as Moopanar left for Madras the first thing in the morning. Karunakaran himself was taciturn when journalists pressed him for details. His sharp reaction to a question about the role Sonia could play in the present political scenario was, however, suggestive. "The basic approach of the Nehru-Gandhi family has been one of secularism," he stressed.

Though Sonia has been maintaining a posture of aloofness, most Congressmen and till-recently-congressmen involved in the current campaign against Rao — Karunakaran, Madhavrao Scindia, P Chidambaram — have recently met her to discuss party affairs.

Karunakaran, who has been camping here for the last one week, said "I have been getting a strong response from a number of surprising quarters."

In an obvious snide at the likes of union ministers Pranab Mukherjee and Ghulam Nabi Azad who have attacked him for opening the leadership question, he said "many leaders who have a mass-base in their respective states have contacted me and expressed their support for the points I have raised."

Karunakaran confirmed that he had a "talk" with Maharashtra Congress satrap [supporter] Sharad Pawar about the post-poll scenario, but refused to divulge any details.

He disdainfully brushed aside the issue of Sonia's nationality, raised again recently by BJP leaders as well as some Rao camp followers and cited instances of past presidents of the Congress party who had been foreigners.

Asked if he felt Narasimha Rao would be amenable to the One man-One post suggestion, Karunakaran said the issue would be dealt with when the revamp of the party is taken up. "The AICC [All India Congress Committee] will discuss the issue and any decision will be a collective one to be implemented by the CWC," he said.

The Rao camp appears to have realised that the challenge is serious. After hue and cry for disciplinary action against Karunakaran raised by the likes of AICC general secretary B P Maurya initially, the leadership is now adopting a conciliatory attitude toward the Kerala veteran.

Asked about Maurya's outburst against Karunakaran, Pranab Mukherjee, who has taken command of Rao's crisis management group retorted: "Mr. Maurya should

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answer the question. Mr Karunakaran is a very senior leader and a very distinguished colleague of all of us."

Mukherjee was at pains to emphasise that only the AICC could decide whether there should be separation of posts of party Chief and Prime minister. He reminded that the AICC session at Surajkund in early 1993 had exempted the Prime Minister from one-man-one-post rule. "It is only the AICC which can review the decision," he argued.

In an informal chat with reporters Pilot said a firm "no" when asked if there was a "remove Rao" campaign in the party. He said if the party suffers a setback in the elections all members of the CWC could be equally responsible. So it was pointless to relate the election of the leader to that eventuality.

Conflict in Congress: Who Stands Where

Pro-Rao:

Pranab Mukherjee: "The party leader is the kingpin in an election and there is no question of change."

Ghulam Nabi Azad: "Congressmen can never think of deserting their leader, particularly during crisis."

B.P. Maurya: "If Karunakaran feels something is wrong, it is his moral responsibility to resign."

V.C. Shukla: "All talk of change in leadership is rubbish. The rank and file of the Congress stands behind Rao."

Anti-Rao:

K Karunakaran: "We will find a new party president after elections. I feel Rao is not able to do justice to party work."

P. Shiv Shanker: "I am in favour of bringing all the Congressmen together including those in JD [Janata Dal]."

C. Subramaniam: "The Congress has become atrophied as a political party due to lack of inner-party democracy."

Bhishma Narain Singh: "There has to be an acceptable leader who can be the unifying factor."

Fence-sitters:

Rajesh Pilot: "None of us has the right to speak on the question of party leadership."

Kamal Nath: "I do not say that the leadership should be changed. But I feel Karunakaran's concerns must be addressed."

Digvijay Singh: "Congress are capable of solving internal problems at the party forum."

Sharad Pawar: "Congressmen should not air their differences in public."

India: Delhi TV Notes 'Major Electoral Setback' for Congress

BK0905021896 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0035 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The ruling Congress appears to be heading for a major electoral setback as initial results and trends show the party losing in its erstwhile bastions. Trends emerging from over 320 constituencies indicate that the ruling party was facing a drubbing in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab, and Delhi. The Bharatiya Janata Party [BJP] topped the list among the winners of 53 results declared so far with 17 seats closely followed by the Congress with 16, and the Janata Dal picking up 13 seats. The electorates in Kerala and Haryana seem to have delivered a stinging anti-establishment verdict where the Congress governments are likely to be voted out making way for the Left Democratic Front and the BJP-Haryana Vikas Party [HVP] combine. The Congress aided by the spilt in the Telugu Desam Party [TDP] was racing for victory in Andhra Pradesh, while it was leading in the neighboring Orissa and Himachal Pradesh. In Andhra Pradesh, The TDP faction led by Lakshmi Parbati, the widow of the late chief minister N.T. Rama Rao, was facing a virtual rout while the ruling Chandrababu Naidu faction has established an early lead in seven seats, while its left allies, CPI and CPI-M [Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India-Marxist] in one each.

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao, was leading in Nandyal of Andhra Pradesh and Berhampur in Orissa from where he was contesting. The BJP was making impressive gains in the party-ruled states of Rajasthan and Gujarat despite the intraparty revolt last year, while adding more to its tally along with its allies Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and HVP in Haryana.

And now the tally:

Among prominent Congress losers are the former union minister, Mr. P.K. Thungon, from the Arunachal [Pradesh] west Lok Sabha seat. He has been defeated by over 49,000 votes by an independent candidate, Tomo Riba. Senior Congress leader, Mr. Janardhana Poojary, has also lost. He lost the Mangalore parliamentary seat by over 14,000 votes to the BJP candidate, Mr. B. Dhananjay Kumar. Former union minister, Mr. Manubhai Kotharia, has lost the Surat Lok Sabha seat in Gujarat. He was defeated by the Gujarat BJP president, Mr. Kanshi Ram Rana, by an overwhelming margin of over 175,000 votes. In Himachal Pradesh, the BJP

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suffered a setback with the former chief minister, Mr. Shanta Kumar, losing the Kangra parliamentary seat to the Congress candidate, Mr. Sat Mahajan, by over 37,000 votes. In Rajasthan, the former chief minister, Mr. Shiv Charan Mathur of Congress-Tiwari has lost the Bhilwara Lok Sabha seat [words indistinct]. The seat has been won by Subhash Baheria of the BJP, defeating his Congress rival, Mr. Mahender Singh Mewar by over 17,000 votes.

The winners: The former Orissa chief minister, Mr. Biju Patnaik, has established a winning lead in the Aska parliamentary seat. He is leading over his nearest Congress rival, Mr. Ram Cnahdra Rath, by a margin of over 75,000 votes.

Among the winners for the Congress are Mr. Oscar Fernandes who retained the Udipi seat in Karnataka. He defeated his nearest BJP candidate, Mr. I.M. Jayarama Chetty, by over 2,500 votes. In the Nagaur parliamentary seat in Rajasthan, Mr. Nathu Ram Mirdha of the Congress has won by over 150,000 votes defeating his nearest BJP rival Mr. Harish Chandra Kumar.

The Karnataka Congress party leader, Mr. S. Bangarappa, has won the Shimoga Lok Sabha seat defeating his nearest BJP rival, Mr. Mangunath, by over 72,000 votes. The Rajasthan Congress statesman, Mr. Ashok Gehlot, has retained the Jodhpur Lok Sabha seat defeating his BJP rival, Mr. Jaswant Singh Bishnoi, by over 54 votes. From the Chhittorgarh Lok Sabha seat in Rajasthan, the prominent BJP candidate, Mr. Jaswant Singh, has been declared elected. He defeated his Congress rival, Mr. Gulab Singh Shekhawat, by over 17,000 votes.

Among the assembly results in Tamil Nadu, the DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] president,. Mr. M. Karunanidhi, has been elected from the Chepauk constituency for a record ninth time in his political career. He defeated his nearest Congress rival, Mr. Nellai Kannan. Reports say that the Tamil Nadu ruling AIADMK [All India Anna DMK] is facing reverses in the assembly elections as well as in the Lok Sabha elections. Tamil Nadu chief, Ms. Jayalalitha, is trailing in Varahur assembly constituency.

The trends: According to the latest trends available, several prominent leaders are trailing. They are former deputy prime minister, Mr. Devi Lal; Tamil Nadu chief minister, Ms. Jayalalitha; former Haryana chief minister, Mr. Om Prakash Chautala; union ministers, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad, Mr. T. P. Rangayya Naidu, Mr. Mukul Wasnik, and Mr. Jagdish Tytler. Also trailing are Mr. Vasant Sathe and film star-turned politician, Mr. Rajesh Khanna. Among those who are leading are prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, in both the constituencies, Mr. K. Karunakaran, Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Mr. Jagmohan, Mr. K.L. Sharma — the BJP candidate from the East Delhi constituency — Mr. B.L. Sharma [word indistinct], Mr. R.L. Bhatia and Mr. G. Venkataswami.

And finally look at the tally once again: Seats 543; election held 537; [results] declared 70; Congress has won 23 seats; BJP 21; Janata Dal 14; CPI-M has not won any seats; and Independents have won four; Shiv Sena one ; CPI none, Samata Party, none; BSP [Bahujan Samaj Party] none; and others none.

India: TV Updates Election Results; Rao Wins Nandyal Seat

BK0905041296 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 0245 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] The ruling Congress appears to be heading for a major electoral set back as initial results and trends show the party losing in its erstwhile bastions. Trends emerging indicate that the ruling party was facing defeat in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, Haryana, Punjab, and Delhi. The electorate in Kerala and Haryana seems to have delivered a strong anti-establishment verdict where the Congress governments are likely to be voted out making way for the Left Democratic Front and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party]-Haryana Vikas Party [HVP] combine.

The Congress aided by the split in the Telugu Desam Party [TDP] is retaining its supremacy in Andhra Pradesh while the TDP faction led by Lakshmi Parbati, widow of the late chief minister, N.T. Rama Rao is facing a virtual rout. The ruling Chandrababu Naidu faction has established an early lead in seven seats while its left alliance, the CPI and CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] in one each. The Congress is leading in the neighboring Orissa and Himachal Pradesh. Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao has established a sizable winning lead in Berhampur and was leading in Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh.

The Janata Dal [JD] leader, Mr. Biju Patnaik, has also established a winning lead in Aska constituency. In Bihar, the ruling Janata Dal received an early set back in the prestigious Hajipur Lok Sabha constituency where its secretary general, Mr. Ram Vilas Paswan, was trailing. However, the party was leading in four of the seven constituencies from where trends were available this morning.

The BJP was making impressive gains in the party ruled states of Rajasthan and Gujarat despite the intraparty revolt last year while adding more to its tally along with its allies — the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra and the HVP in Haryana.

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And now a look at the latest tally available. Seats declared 542; elections held to 537; results declared 91; Congress has won in 36, BJP in 24, JD 14, Shiv Sena 3, CPI 1 and others 13. [passage omitted]

In Kerala, the CPI-M-led Left Democratic Front — LDF — appears to be set to recapture power after a gap of five years. The front was ahead in 85 of the 140 assembly constituencies. Counting of votes has reached a decisive stage when reports last came in. The Congress-led UDF [United Democratic Front] could muster a lead only in 35 constituencies. However, in the Lok Sabha polls, the UDF was ahead in 11 of the 20 constituencies and the LDF in nine.

In Pondicherry, the Congress-AIADMK [All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] is slowly but steadily inching toward victory claiming nine of the 15 assembly seats declared so far. The chief minister, Mr. Vaidyalingam, of the Congress-I has retained Nettapakkam seat. The party has bagged six seats so far. Its alliance partner AIADMK which has so far won three seats in the state assembly suffered a major setback in the defeat of former chief minister, Mr. D. Ramachandran in Nelithope constituency.

In Tamil Nadu, DMK-Tamil Maanila Congress alliance is all set to sweep the polls. [passage omitted]

The senior Congress leader, Mr. K. Karunakaran, has said that only the newly elected Congress members to the Lok Sabha and those in the Rajya Sabha will elect their parliamentary party leader. Speaking to Doordarshan in Trivandrum last night, Mr. Karunakaran said that projecting the leader beforehand would mean curtailing the powers of new MP's. Meanwhile, the Tamil Maanila Congress leader, Mr. G.K. Moopanar, has refused to divulge the details of his recent meeting in Delhi with Mr. Karunakaran. Talking to media persons in Madras, Mr. Moopanar asserted that the election trends had vindicated his decision to form a separate party and forge an alliance against the ruling AIADMK in Tamil Nadu.

Here is a flash. The prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, has been declared elected in Nandyal Constituency in Andhra Pradesh. He defeated his nearest TDP rival by over 98,000 votes.

Dhenkanal seat in Orissa has gone to the Congress. The party candidate, Mr. K.P. Singhdeo, has defeated his nearest Janata Dal rival by over 86,000 votes.

India: Congress Spokesman Blames Rao for Poor Election Result

BK0905064096 Hong Kong AFP in English 0622 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] New Delhi, May 9 (AFP) — Indian Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was urged to quit by the opposition Thursday [9 May] as his Congress (I) party headed for a rout in national elections expected to produce a hung parliament.

The Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP, Indian People's Party) and the Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) said Rao should step down in keeping with the emerging popular mandate.

The Congress, faced with its worst electoral showing since independence in 1947, did not respond to the demand but indicated it would prefer to bow out of power gracefully.

Although the ballot produced no clear winner, voting trends confirmed the emergence of a third successive fractured parliament, paving the way for a spell of political intrigue and a coalition government whose composition was unclear.

The 111-year-old Congress, wracked by infighting and facing a post-poll leadership tussle, conceded defeat as continuing vote-counting showed it was set to lose one of every two seats it had won in the last election in 1991.

The Congress drew little comfort from the 74-year-old Rao's re-election to the 545-seat Lok Sabha, the lower house of parliament, from two constituencies. His victory margin dropped drastically in one of the places.

"The fact is that we are losing. There is no question about it," said Pranab Mukherjee, chairman of the Congress campaign committee. Added Congress spokesman Vithal Gadgil: "The trends are going against us."

The impending defeat prompted calls for Rao's immediate resignation.

"Democratic traditions demand that the PM should submit his resignation at the earliest possible date, even without waiting for the final results," BJP vice president Jana Krishnamarth said.

"This would be normally expected of the PM," he added. "He should respect the people's mandate."

CPI-M politburo member Sitaram Yechury also called on the embattled prime minister to resign, saying the election showed "the people have voted for a non-Congress government."

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Out of 67 seats that had been decided after a day and night of counting of millions of votes, the Congress had won 23 but failed to retain 20 seats it had taken in the 1991 general election.

The main opposition BJP had won 21, the centrist Janata Dal (People's Party) 14 and the remainder were bagged by smaller parties.

The Congress was leading in 94 of the 342 constituencies where the vote count was continuing, but was inching towards defeat in 99 seats it held in the outgoing house.

The splintered opposition made spectacular gains at the ruling party's expense, routing it in its strongholds in the south and west of the country. Several Congress veterans were humbled.

"The Congress appears to be heading for a major electoral setback," state-run television said.

Election analysts said the Congress, India's oldest party, may end up with 130-145 seats, behind the BJP with 160-170 in a hung parliament. A centre-left alliance could win 110-130 seats.

It would be the worst performance ever at the hustings by the Congress, whose share of the national vote was projected to fall to a historic low, even lower than its 1977 showing when it was voted out of power for the first time.

The Congress would also be voted out in three of five states which elected new assemblies, was lagging behind the communists in another state, and being handed a drubbing in a southern state along with an ally.

It was leading in Rao's home state of Andhra Pradesh, benefitting from a split in a regional party that governs the southern state. But it was dealt severe blows by a Sikh party in the northern state of Punjab.

Political leaders discussed the formation of a coalition government, meanwhile, with secular groups determined to stop the aggressively pro-Hindu BJP from coming to office.

What kind of formation could take power under whom was unclear, but small parties, regional organisations and victorious Congress rebels appeared to hold the key as the stage was set for back-room political haggling.

A despondent Congress implicitly blamed Rao for the miserable show.

"He did well as PM, but his failure is as Congress president," party spokesman Gadgil told AFP in a rare public criticism of Rao. "He did not devote enough time for party work.

"In the past five years, we totally neglected the party," he added.

India: Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Resigns Following Poll Debacle

BK0905085496 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in Hindi 0830 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Mrs. Jayalalitha has resigned. Her resignation follows the complete rout of the All India Anna-Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam in the Tamil Nadu state assembly elections. A communique issued by the Governor's House in Madras says that Governor Dr. N. Chenna Reddy has accepted her resignation.

Kerala Chief Minister A.K. Anthony has also decided to resign following the defeat of the Congress-I-led United Democratic Front in the state assembly elections. He is to submit his resignation this evening. Mr. Anthony announced this at a news conference in Trivandrum today.

Iran

Iran: Velayati Interviewed on Israeli 'Aggression'

NC0905075396 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 26 Apr 96 p 16

[Interview with Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by unidentified correspondent in Damascus; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent] What is your assessment of the ongoing political efforts to stop the Zionist aggression against Lebanon? Also, what is your assessment of the outcome of the aggression thus far?

[Velayati] We believe that the main reason for the Zionist aggression against innocent people in southern Lebanon is a miscalculation by the United States and the Zionist entity.

Relying on erroneous information, the Israelis imagined that they could wipe out Hizballah in three or four days. They imagined that they could destroy Hizballah's capabilities and create a rift between it and the Lebanese people so that they would then have the upper hand in southern Lebanon.

Fortunately and with divine providence, they have miscalculated. Hizballah has been able to stand fast, defend Lebanese territory, as well as the citizens in southern Lebanon, and enhance its reputation. On the 13th day of the Zionist aggression, we can see that Hizballah has kept its head high, has stood fast against the Zionist attacks, and has defended the Lebanese people's dignity.

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The reason for the failure of the proposals, especially the U.S. proposals, submitted thus far to end the Israeli aggression against the Lebanese people is that the Americans have been viewing the situation from one perspective. On the first day of the aggression, the U.S. secretary of state announced that the United States fully supported Israel. He then tried to impose and peddle a certain formula or proposal.

The U.S. total support for Israel has provoked a reaction among the region's and world's peoples that has been supportive of the resistance and critical of the United States. This has forced the Americans to abandon their first proposal and submit another one. In any case, their miscalculation about the resistance and steadfastness of the Lebanese people and the cohesion between the government, the people, and the resistance has foiled their plans.

God willing, we hope the world public pressure on Israel will force it to stop its savage aggression against Lebanon.

[Correspondent] The Islamic Republic of Iran has played a key role in the ongoing contacts. Can you comment on this?

[Velayati] Since the beginning of the aggression we have employed all our capabilities to help the Lebanese people and stop the Zionist attacks on Lebanon. We have held contacts with several parties. We sent a delegation led by Kazem Khonsari, the foreign minister's adviser for Middle East affairs, to Lebanon. He held contacts with Lebanese officials and Islamic Resistance officials in southern Lebanon. He also held contacts with the foreign ministers of Russia, Syria, and Italy, which is currently the president of the EU. All our efforts, as well as the regional and international efforts, have focused on stopping the brutal Israeli aggression. I believe Israel and the United States are now frustrated because we see that there is no justification for the excuses Israel uttered at the beginning of its aggression. This proves that Israel has realized that it cannot always flex its muscles without provoking regional and world opinion against it.

[Correspondent] How do you assess the contacts you held in the Syrian capital?

[Velayati] Our assessment is that Syria—both the government and the people—supports the Lebanese Government, people, and Islamic resistance. One of the most important factors in the resistance's victory in Lebanon is this strong solidarity and cohesion between the Syrian Government and people and the Lebanese Government, people, and Islamic resistance. This cohesion has caused despair in the enemy's heart.

During our meetings with Syrian officials, we sensed their determination to support what is right as they always did. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad has a basic role in this and plays an important role in the continuation of steadfastness in the face of the stubborn Zionist enemy.

[Correspondent] Did you discuss the Lebanese situation during your visit to Morocco?

[Velayati] The main aim and subject of these talks was the situation in Lebanon. The Moroccan Government currently chairs the Organization of the Islamic Conference [OIC]. I sent a message to the OIC Secretary General Hamid al-Ghabid asking him to convene an extraordinary meeting of the Islamic countries' foreign ministers. The aim of the meeting was to discuss the recent developments in southern Lebanon and declare stands in support of the Lebanese Government and people and against the Zionist enemy to win international political support and the humanitarian and economic aid that the Lebanese people need today in these circumstances.

Also, it has been decided to call a UN General Assembly session. Mr. Zarif, adviser to the foreign minister for international affairs in the Islamic Republic of Iran, left for New York today to participate in that session and express Iran's view on the matter. This, along with pressure from the international public, will help deter Israel from continuing its aggression.

[Correspondent] What do you say about the Lebanese people's steadfastness and the Islamic resistance's performance?

[Velayati] What we see in Lebanon today is a valuable symbol of Islamic faith and steadfastness. We sense the Lebanese people's patience and steadfastness; we see this clearly in the Islamic resistance mujahidin in Lebanon. Besides, unity and cohesion between the Lebanese Government and the Islamic resistance in southern Lebanon is unparalleled and this is a very effective factor.

We hope that Israel will stop its aggression against the Lebanese people soon to enable the innocent, defenseless people who were evicted from their homes in southern Lebanon to return there. Then we will see again the unity and understanding between the inhabitants of southern Lebanon and the Islamic resistance and see enhanced accord among the government, people, and the Islamic resistance.

Here I feel that it is my duty to extend the warmest condolences to all the families who lost their loved ones during this ferocious Zionist onslaught, particularly the

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families whose loved ones were killed in Qana and other towns and villages in southern Lebanon.

I convey to all of them the Iranian Government's and people's condolences. I announce that the Islamic Republic of Iran began to extend its aid as soon as the aggression began and that it will continue this aid. Iran stands by the Lebanese Government and people to increase this aid. We are completely ready to offer all kinds of assistance to our brothers and sisters in Lebanon immediately after the aggression stops, especially in rebuilding what has been destroyed in southern Lebanon.

Iran: Sudanese Envoy on 'Upward Trend' of Tehran-Khartoum Ties

LD0805125596 Tehran IRNA in English 1006 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, May 8, IRNA — Sudanese Ambassador to Tehran Qutbi al-Mahdi said that Tehran-Khartoum economic cooperation is enjoying an upward trend, trade relations are expanding and cultural exchanges are growing.

In an interview with 'KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL' printed on Wednesday [8 May], he elaborated on the latest international and regional developments.

On Israeli 16-day attack on south Lebanon, he underlined that the Hizballah forces showed that real war is against Islam and that the Zionist regime wanted to eliminate any Islamic movement on the pretence of presenting peace.

As to the recent U.N. Security Council resolution against Sudan, he stated that the resolution was contemplated by the U.S. and some of its allies and it is aimed at crippling Sudan as they do not want Sudan to become a strong country.

Iran: Azeri Foreign Minister Affirms Good Relations With Iran

LD0905092496 Tehran IRNA in English 0629 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Baku, May 9, IRNA — Azeri Foreign Minister Hasan Hasanov has stressed that his country will not allow its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran to become cold.

In an interview with the latest issue of the Azeri-language weekly 'NAKHICHEVAN', he dismissed baseless claims that Tehran-Baku relations are at low level. He added that there is no problem between the two republics.

Commenting on inauguration of Mashhad-Sarakhs-Tajan railway, he noted that the track is of international importance.

He added that the Azeri President Heydar Aliyev will be attending the inaugural ceremony of the railroad, scheduled for May 13.

As to construction of Amirabad port, at the Caspian Sea, Hasanov stated that since the port could be used for shipping of railway wagons, therefore, it is another major project boosting Iran's transport facilities.

He further expressed hope that by construction of Astara-Astara railway bridge connecting the two cities of Astara, on both sides of Iran-Azerbaijan border, and also laying of the Qazvin-Astara railway track, the Azeri railway will be linked to Iran's railway network.

Iran: Major Military Maneuver Scheduled

LD0805164596 Tehran IRAN in Persian 6 May 96 p 3

[Report: "Biggest armed forces maneuver to be held soon"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The armed forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran are to hold their biggest maneuver, codenamed "The Great Velayat Maneuver", by the end of Ordibehesht [month ending 20 May]. Several infantry and armored divisions, hundreds of modern tanks, several special commando brigades, several artillery units, anti-aircraft units of the ground forces, hundreds of fighter bombers and logistic planes of the air force, and helicopters will take part.

In order to demonstrate capabilities of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the region, the maneuver will be completed in a short space of time.

Iran: Protesters Attack Tehran Cinema

LD0805173396 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 6 May 96 p 14

[Report: "Attack on Qods Cinema in Tehran"]

[FBIS Translated Text] A group of protesters, shouting Allah o-Akbar [God is Great], have smashed the windows of the Qods cinema in Tehran and entered the building. They inflicted bodily harm to the official in charge of cinema and the audience.

The incident happened at 1730 during the screening of a film called "Gift Of India" produced by Mohammad Reza Zehtabi. Following the incident, those families who were trapped inside left the building in confusion.

An employee of the cinema says a pregnant woman fell from the stairs and was injured in the incident.

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The protesters inflicted heavy damage to the cinema by smashing windows and children's toys in the waiting room and the cinema's chairs.

By criticizing the permission given to screen the film, they were protesting against the cultural policies of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Iran: Majles Receives Bill for Censuring Interior Minister

LD0805210296 Tehran SALAM in Persian 6 May 96 p 4

[Report by parliamentary correspondent Pur-Taher: "News About the Motions of Censure Against the Ministers of Interior and Construction Jihad"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The bill for the censure of Interior Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati was presented to the Islamic Consultative Majles presidium yesterday by 13 Majles deputies.

In an interview, the deputy from Bijar, Mohammad Ali Moqnian, said regarding this issue: On the basis of Articles 150 and 151 of the internal regulations, the presidium is dutybound to announce that it has received the bill immediately, and place it on the agenda of the Majles at the same session or the next one (today, Monday).

He added: We hope that the esteemed Majles presidium will not ignore the internal regulations and abides by its promise on the proper management of the Majles. It should announce the receipt of the censure motion without wasting time, so that, God forbid, this censure motion does not meet the fate of other similar cases; that is, being left in a Majles presidium drawer.

Replying to a question on whether this case of censure will be dealt with before the term of the fourth Majles is finished, he said: Yes, if the Majles internal regulations are observed, the minister is dutybound to present himself at the Majles within 10 days of the censure motion and reply to questions related to the censure of him.

Replying to another question on the possibility that deputies may withdraw their signatures, he said: All the deputies who have signed the motion for the censure of the interior minister are persisting with their demand, and they wholeheartedly believe that a serious violation has taken place and there is no room for compromise.

There is evidence that shows violations and weak management during the elections. Of course it is possible to say: What does the annulment of voting in a certain constituency or violation of the law by this or that governor have to do with the interior minister? We saw that when an aircraft crashed the esteemed former roads and transport minister, Mr Sa'idi-Kia, who is a religious, revolutionary man and a follower of the imam's line was censured. We have the same situation here. If we have 10 to 20 cases of weak management and violations during the elections, they are all connected to the interior minister himself and his management. [passage omitted]

Iran: Outgoing Shahrud Deputy Briefs Majles on Local Problems

LD0805134696 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 1 May 96 p 11

["Remarks by Shahrud deputy" — Speech by Shahrud deputy Seyyed Mohammad Musavi Shahrudi at the Majles open session on 30 April; from the Majles column]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Seyyed Mohammad Musavi Shahrudi, deputy for Shahrud, was the first speaker prior to discussion on the agenda of yesterday's open session of the Islamic Majles. [passage omitted]

Addressing the people of Shahrud, he said: You know very well that during the short period of my term as a Majles deputy I did not spare any efforts to please God and serve you, the noble people of Shahrud, taking into account the extensive administration difficulties. I have persistently taken steps to resolve your problems using my many years of experience in my educational and working life. I have compiled a 90-page report on the activities of my office and presented it to you, the noble people. If there has been any omission on my part during this period, I hope you will be forgive me by your kindness.

He added: On rejection of my competency regarding taking part in the elections for the Fifth Majles, you are more aware than anyone else about the honesty and interest of this son of Shahrud and my family in serving you.

In view of the fact that a year ago the authorities approved my competency, very delicate points remain that you know about [as published]. I have registered my strong protest, unfortunately I have not received any reply. I think this shortcoming in the election law will be resolved by the fifth Majles.

The important point for me is the fact that I did not find an opportunity to serve you again. I am sorry that they did not allow me to use the fruits of my many years of experience and higher education to serve the noble and Muslim people of Iran and especially the kind people of Shahrud. You should know that wherever I may be, I will always be thinking of you and will be saddened

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by your deprivation. I will not spare anything to serve you sincerely.

My advice to you, my dear Shahrudi people, is that the people of our city are religious people and have revolutionary thinking and are brave. Our land has an appropriate and variable climate and has various resources; therefore, it is suitable for progress. Unfortunately, owing to some problems that I will mention below, it has not been put on the road of progress:

1. In Shahrud, there are certain number of people who consider themselves the guardians of people. They are creating [an adverse] climate by spreading baseless rumors to protect their own faction and to deprive our people of thinking about progress and development. You, the dear people, know these people very well and are aware of their records. Let us come and implement the slogan of cultural, social, and economic development within the framework of Islamic values and instructions of the great leader of the revolution, for the sake of God, the future of the country, system and our children and for the sake of progress in Shahrud.

2. Because of contradictions and lack of coordination within cities and provinces, which were created for some reasons in the past, the city's major industrial administrative offices, including mines, industry, and standard departments have not shown an appropriate growth. In addition our city cannot take any decision regarding the expansion of industry and commerce because of the lack of a chamber of commerce and industry and export terminals. Therefore, we must listen to the late imam's [Khomeyni's] instructions in his will about unity and must try to create unity among the people and expand the city's major executive administrative offices.

3. Our city has caring and experienced officials and experts; however, alongside these people, there are officials who must be replaced, trained, or reinforced, and our administrative offices must be expanded.

4. We are hoping that the other problems will be resolved with the authorities' assistance and people's support. They are the lack of a strategic development program in the city in order to create light and small intermediate productive industries to employ young people, rural development and the development of activities of productive cooperatives and the development of culture, leisure, and women's sports and the expansion of the road networks. [passage omitted]

Iran: Velayati on Tehran's Involvement in Mideast Peace Talks

LD0805171996 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 5 May 96 pp 1, 14

[Report: "Velayati: Iran Need Not Enter Middle East Talks from Back Door"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran — Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati on Wednesday [1 May] told the TEHRAN TIMES that Iran saw no need to enter the Middle East peace talks from the back door.

In an exclusive interview, he said the US and Israel are eagerly waiting for Iran's involvement in the Middle East peace talks but that it will not participate because it believes the talks cannot restore peace to the region.

"We do not need to enter the talks from the back door," the foreign minister stressed.

Some analysts considered Iran's mediation in the Israeli-imposed war against Lebanon as a kind of back-door entry to the Middle East peace talks.

Speaking of Iran's latest diplomatic achievement in recent events in Lebanon, he said the cease-fire which it helped to conclude between the warring sides stopped the continued killing of innocent people.

He credited bilateral, regional and international efforts taken by countries such as Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Russia, and the EU, especially France, as being instrumental in bringing about the cease-fire, adding that though the Americans obviously appeared to be active in the search for a solution, they were not really interested in bringing peace to the region.

He said that Russian participation in the supervisory committee to monitor the cease-fire was opposed by the Americans, notwithstanding Iran's support, and that initially the US tried to block France's entry but later agreed.

"The agreement leading to a cease-fire created a new atmosphere for closer cooperation between Iran, Syria, Lebanon, Russia, and the EU," Velayati said, expressing hopes that the cooperation would continue in future problem areas.

He said that drawing Russia to a close and meaningful cooperation with countries in the Middle East, after the lapse of a few years, is an achievement in itself, the success of which can be attributed to joint efforts undertaken to solve the crisis in Lebanon.

"The events leading to the cease-fire also opened opportunities for Russia to renew its active involvement in the Middle East," he concluded.

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Iran: Paper on Reviewing Middle East Policies

LD0805164096 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 6 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed editorial: "EU, Middle Eastern countries should review Middle Eastern policies"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Italian Foreign Minister Susanna Agnelli, currently on a fact-finding trip to the Middle East, has said, "The attitude of the world should be more balanced towards the region."

The statement reveals that the world's attitude towards the Middle East has been unjustifiably biased. The slow reaction of the international community to stop the genocide of Muslims by Israeli war criminals indicates that the world attitude towards the Middle East requires a radical change.

Indeed, Washington rewarded Israeli war criminals with a series of military agreements a day after Israelis halted their attacks on south Lebanon which shows Washington's strong inclination to support Israeli war criminals. This biased attitude has undermined US credibility. As a result, Middle Eastern countries have lost hope in the US.

Fortunately, the regional counties are coming to their senses, especially after the Israeli genocide of Lebanese Muslims. They are gradually realizing that despite peace gestures, the US will not give up its support of the Zionist regime, even at the cost of setting the whole region on fire. This fact is discernible in Secretary of Defence William Perry's statement when he threatened to use nuclear weapons to protect Israel.

In order to change the world's attitude towards the Middle East crisis, regional countries should work on two levels: (1) regional, and (2) international.

The war in Lebanon has prepared the ground for a more meaningful cooperation among regional countries. For instance, Egypt, the first country to sign a peace agreement with Israel, is now more than ever inclined to join the anti-Israeli bloc.

Referring to the biased US attitude towards the Middle East crisis, the Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa has said, "...certainly there is an imbalance now in dealing with the Arab-Israeli equation."

Indeed, the US-Israeli bloc has been active in encircling Syria and posing serious threats to Egypt's national security by signing a military accord with Turkey. The Tel Aviv-Ankara military accord was signed to contain the potential and actual anti-Israeli frontline states.

Hence, these states must close ranks and consolidate bilateral and multilateral cooperation among themselves for two purposes: First, it would reduce their dependence on the United States; and secondly, it would, in the long run, force the US, the main supporter of the Zionist regime - to balance its attitude towards the Middle East.

Taking into account the Israeli-Turkish military accord, Egypt should review its Middle Eastern policy. Owing to its historical role, its Muslim population, and its geopolitical location, Egypt is in a position to play a crucial role in changing the balance in favour of the Islamic front if it mends fences with Iran and Syria, the two pillars of the anti-Israeli bloc. Iran is ready to extend all possible assistance in consolidating this front.

Secondly, the EU has realized that it has been sidelined by the US in major international political events of the post-Cold War era. This isolationism has had its repercussions for th EU not only in the political, but also in the economic arena. One of its offshoots has been US blackmailing of the EU in international trade.

Having a major portion of the world's raw materials at their disposal, Middle Eastern nations can play a crucial role in thwarting Washington's imperialism if they combine the leverage of owning raw materials with the political influence of the European Union.

Iran: 'Spies' Threatened With Death Penalty

LD0805170496 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 6 May 96 pp 1, 7

[Report: "Majles Ratifies Additions to Penal Code"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] TEHRAN, 5 May - Those who reveal national classified information to foreigners will face the death penalty.

The Majles in its open session here on Sunday [5 May], approved this article of the Islamic penal code.

According to the new approval, those who divulge information on secret negotiations or correspondence or national classified military, political, security, economic, social and scientific information to foreigners, especially to Americans and Zionists or their agents or any outlawed groups, will be considered as "spies"; all their properties which have been earned through their espionage activities will be confiscated and they will get the death penalty.

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Iran: Paper on Bread Price Controversy

LD0805171396 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 5 May 96 p 2

[Unattributed editorial: "Bread Once More in Oven of People's Concern"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nan, popularly pronounced Noon, has once more become a focal point of attention of the Iranians. An open controversy on the prices of breads, or Noon exists in Iran where Bakers Syndicate, acting on their own, increased prices.

In the meantime, the Ministry of Commerce announced that, as per routine, wheat flour is delivered to the bakers at the same rate as in the past. The ministry said bakers have unilaterally raised around 30 per cent of the bread prices.

Bread enjoys both economic and political aspects in Iran as it is a staple diet in the country. Since the 1906 Constitutional Revolution, all governments in Tehran, before and after the victory of the Islamic revolution, paid due attention to the price of bread.

In the course of the Constitutional Revolution, the price of bread was one of the main sources of concern. The issue was resolved after controlling bread's prices through heavy financial backing by the government.

Since then, heavy subsidy was paid by all the governments to keep the prices of all types of breads in Iran relatively constant. It is generally believed that Iranians remained satisfied with the bread prices with government financial assistance.

Unfortunately, because of its low price, upper and upper middle classes of the society caused heavy wastage of the bread. It is estimated that some 20 to 40 per cent of unused bread finds its way into trash by the financially well off class of the society, a fact which can and should not be ignored.

As far as statistics are concerned, Iran produces around 11 million tons of wheat annually and imports some two million tons.

In the light of the above mentioned facts, the present situation for the bread subsidy and its price can and should not last long. True, we must keep the interest of the deprived class of the society on the top of all, but we have to give serious consideration to the plight of the generations to come.

The ball is again in the court of the government as the bakers have their own reasons for bread price hikes. They say the cost of labours, electricity, water and as a whole day-to-day's expenses have greatly gone up. They were forced to raise bread prices to meet the family budget.

So we see that bread once more is in the oven of people's concern and the government should act promptly to fix just and fair price of the bread before the issue takes an undesirable turn.

Iran: Third Press Festival Held in Tehran

LD0805155696 Tehran KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL in English 5 May p 2

[FBIS Translated Text] The Third Press Festival, held in Tehran last week, was another step forward in the history of the Iranian press. It would be worthwhile to assess the achievements as well as the failures of this gathering, particularly in the light of Thursday's [2 May] remarks of the leader of the Islamic revolution Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i to the press corps.

First of all, it is needless to say that the officials in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, particularly those who were in charge of the press festival, made great efforts to coordinate the festival to its best, so that there was no room left for unwanted developments which could have a negative impact on the media fete.

Secondly, we have no option but to remind the ministry's officials on the jury selected for assessing the works presented as some of our colleagues in the press community made criticisms regarding their experiences as well as the jury's past and present relations with the press [sentence as published].

It will be appreciated if this point is taken note of, and hopefully will be rectified at the next exposition so as to satisfy all sections of the Fourth Estate.

However, we have to clarify that some of the articles selected by the various committees in charge of the different fields of press achievements in the past year, were incompatible with the concepts and ideals of the principles of the revolution and the glorious path of the late Imam. Although such articles eventually failed to top the list, one must nevertheless be aware of the fact that this festival only concerned the press corps loyal to Islamic principles and the Imam's path. The press hostile to Islamic traditions had nothing to do with it.

One more point is the necessity of the massive and all-out presence of our colleagues at such festivals so that they do their fair share in a significant cultural event which basically concerns them and their profession.

Going back to the speech of Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i there is no doubt that he drew the attention of writers and journalists to some basic issues related to the current situation of the press in Iran.

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He said: there are some unreliable people in certain segments of the press who are taking advantages of the freedom granted in the Islamic Republic.

Such people, as the leader put it, complain about the lack of freedom and, obviously being under the influence of an alien culture and in line with their anti-Iran propaganda, raise all kinds of libels against the government and officials.

Unfortunately, these people are at present free to express their secular and non-religious ideas in the absence of limitations put by our officials in the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, whose primary task is to help preserve the Islamic and national identity of our country in the face of Western influence and imported concepts of secularism and liberalism.

No doubt, the leader's remarks will have its own effects on the press community, and in the process, will open a new chapter in the activities of the press so that Iranian journalism will get a boost in the quality of its cultural, literary, artistic, political and social presentations, as recommended by the leader.

Iran: Commentary on Abuse of Press Rules

LD0805163796 Tehran TEHRAN TIMES in English 6 May 96 p 14

[Unattributed commentary: "On Press and Violation of Rules and Regulations"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rights and duties go hand in hand. Without any doubt the press plays a crucial role in consolidating the foundations of democracy. However, in a democracy, too, there are limits beyond which a journalist should not go.

Democracy itself should not be abused to violate rules and regulations. Indeed, violation of rules and regulations is itself an anti-democratic measure in any country.

If journalists violate rules and regulations, there are legal procedures to bring them to book. If a journalist is brought to book through legal procedures and found guilty of violating the law of the land, he is liable to be punished accordingly.

In one case recently decided by the court, Abbas Ma'rufi was found guilty of violating the press laws. However, Ma'rufi appealed to a higher court for his case to be heard. When the lower court issued its verdict, it did not bar the offender from leaving the country. He left the country. The higher court confirmed the ruling of the lower court in the presence of his lawyer. His magazine, Gardun, has also been banned by the court.

The law according to which Ma'rufi has been found guilty has been approved by the legislature. In any country, any person in any position violating the law is punished.

The same law suspended the daily SALAM for violating rules and regulations. How is it that certain circles shed crocodile tears only for Ma'rufi? Could it be it is because Ma'rufi and his ilk play into their tune?

It should be borne in mind that, throughout the world, rights and duties go hand in hand. Offenders are naturally deprived of privileges they are inclined to abuse.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Speaks at Banquet; Confers With Persson

BK0905062896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said if the world community can unite to secure the right of self-determination for South Africa and Palestine, why the same right is being denied to the Kashmiri people. She was speaking at a banquet hosted in Stockholm in her honor by the Swedish prime minister, Mr. Goeran Persson, last night. The prime minister said it is a tragedy that South Asia is plagued by this prolonged unresolved dispute. The issue has become more dangerous by the accelerated Indian militarization process. She said the Indian program to develop ballistic missiles capable of carrying conventional and nuclear arsenal is an ominous development. The prime minister asked Sweden to help Pakistan to secure a nuclear and missile-free South Asia. She said Pakistan and Sweden could cooperate in promoting peace and understanding and helping each other in the technical development and global trade. She said Pakistan is proceeding with the most rapid economic transformation in the history of the region. Ms. Benazir Bhutto pointed out that as a gateway to the strategic Central Asian market, we in Pakistan are developing ports, railways, and roads to connect the Arabian Sea with the Central Asian economies. We have signed major agreements with China, Afghanistan, and Central Asian Republics to facilitate transit trade.

Earlier, welcoming Ms. Benazir Bhutto, the Swedish prime minister said his country will continue to help Pakistan to secure economic development. He expressed the confidence that the commitment of Pakistan prime minister to democracy and economic development would carry forward Pakistan to a better placing.

The Pakistani and Swedish prime ministers at their formal talks yesterday reviewed bilateral cooperation and

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international issues of mutual concern. They agreed to further develop trade and economic relations between the two countries. Sweden agreed to help Pakistan in the development of fisheries, human resources, rehabilitation of women and children, and promotion of vocational training. Prime Minister told the Swedish leader that Pakistan is ideally suited to become a center of production of Swedish companies for exports to the Gulf, Middle East, Central Asia, and East Asia markets. The two prime ministers agreed that there were some distorted reports about child and bonded labor in Pakistan. The Swedish leader was briefed about the Indian nuclear and missile threat not only to Pakistan but to the region and beyond. It was also explained that Indian naval build up in Nicobar island posed a threat to maritime links. Briefing newsmen, the Pakistan foreign secretary said the Swedish side gave the understanding that they highly valued cooperation with Pakistan.

The prime minister called on the speaker of the Swedish parliament, Ms. (Brijida Dalle) in Stockholm. Ms. Benazir briefed the speaker on social development program in Pakistan, women and children welfare scheme, and environmental protection measures. The speaker, who holds the second highest position in the Swedish hierarchy after the King, was also told about the Indian repression in occupied Kashmir. Ms. Benazir Bhutto also had a meeting with the chairman and members of the Standing Committee of the Swedish Parliament.

Pakistani and Swedish businessmen have set up a forum to promote mutual cooperation. The forum will meet every six months. Radio Pakistan's special representative, Bakshish Ahmad, reports from Stockholm that the two countries are to sign three agreements in the private sector.

Pakistan: Former Afghan Leader Mojaddedi Meets Interior Minister

BK0905062496 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0300 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A former Afghan president, Syed Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, called on the interior minister, retired Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar, in Islamabad yesterday. The two sides hoped that peace would return to Afghanistan. It was elaborated that Pakistan has no favorites and would honor the collective decision of the Afghan people. The interior minister told the Afghan leader that Pakistan will support all efforts aimed at bringing normalcy in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, an Afghan delegation left Islamabad for home after having talks with Pakistani officials.

Pakistan: Ali—India Must Give Self-Determination Right to Kashmiris

BK0805113096 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has said India must ensure implementation of UN resolutions on Kashmir and give Kashmiri people their right of self-determination. Talking to newsmen in Potli in Azad Kashmir, he said Pakistan is actively informing the world community about the custodial deaths of human right activists and the murder attempts on lives of Kashmiri leaders in occupied Kashmir. He said the people of Pakistan and AJK [Azad Jammu and Kashmir] and Kashmiris in held-Kashmir are one. They feel the pain when their Kashmiri brothers are tortured and sisters are dishonored by the Indian forces. The foreign minister said Pakistan will continue its struggle till the people of Kashmir get their right to self-determination.

Pakistan: Punjab Assembly Condemns India's Holding of Kashmir Election

BK0905053896 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 0500 GMT 9 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Punjab Assembly yesterday adopted a unanimous resolution condemning Indian government for holding elections in occupied Kashmir against the wishes of Kashmiri people. The house called upon the United Nations to ensure that Kashmiris get their right of self-determination in accordance with its resolutions.

The chairman of the parliamentary Kashmir committee, Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan, has said India is holding farce elections in occupied Kashmir to hoodwink international community. He was speaking at the inaugural session of an international seminar on Quade-i-Azam [Jinnah], Pakistan and Kashmir. The prime minister of Azad Kashmir, Sardar Mohammad Abdul Qayyum Khan, said elections in the occupied valley will simply aggravate the situation. Forty-five delegates from home and abroad are attending the two-day seminar.

Pakistan: MQM, Jam'iyat-e Eslami Form Political Alliance

BK0905105296 Islamabad THE NATION in English 9 May 96 pp 1, 13

[Report by Shamin Bano]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Karachi — The MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] and Jam'iyat-e Eslami have decided to form a broad-based political alliance and in this connection they will start contacting political as well as

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religious parties. At the initial phase two controversial issues pertaining to Sindh Local Government Ordinance [SLGO] and Water Board Bill have been discussed later the national issues will be discussed at a broader level.

This was announced by the Naib Amir [deputy chief] Jam'iyat-e Eslami, Prof Ghafoor Ahmed and Ajmal Dehlvi, Chief of Negotiating team jointly in a Press conference held at MQM Markaz [Center] 90 after the conclusion of second round of talks on Wednesday [8 May]. Also present on the occasion from Jam'iyat-e-Eslami side were Naimatullah Khan, Jan Mohammad Abbasi and Amir [chief] Jam'iyat-e Eslami Sindh, Muhammad Hussain Mehnti. The MQM team led by Ajmal Dehlvi included Qazi Shoaib Ahmed Bukhari, Shaikh Liaquat Hussain and Tariq Javed.

A joint forum will be formed which will pressurize the Government to withdraw both the said bills, which according to them were, 'undemocratic and black laws' which will not only affect the City but be dangerous for the entire country, they said.

It may be mentioned here that first round of talks was held at Idar-e-Noor-e-Haq in the last week of April in which both the parties reached consensus on the major issues.

Asked whether it was final round or more rounds will be held, Prof Ghafoor replied that they would remain in constant touch and suggestions from other parties will also be sought.

The meeting between MQM and JI started at about 3.00 p.m. and lasted for about two and a half hours. During their long meeting they put certain demands before the Government. Firstly, they demanded that both the Bills, SLGO and Water Board Bill should be withdrawn. Asked what strategy will the parties adopt if the government did not accept their demands, they said it was premature to say anything, however, protests against the Government will be staged to get rid of the bills.

They also demanded that the government should hold negotiations with the political parties in order to make the atmosphere congenial and redress their grievances.

They demanded that a high-level commission comprising judges of Supreme Court should be constituted to investigate the extrajudicial killings specially in Karachi and generally in Sindh.

They demanded that siege and search operations should be stopped and the government should take to task the agencies official who extort bhatta [bribes] from people.

They accused government of appointing KWSB [Karachi Water Supply Board] chief on 'political grounds' instead of merit. They said city is facing acute shortage of water and many areas remain in dark for hours due to suspension of power supply in the name of loadshedding. The government should take action against the responsible persons, they demanded.

They were also critical of Prime Minister's Karachi package and said it has evaporated in the air.

They demanded of the Chief Justice of the High Courts to personally pay surprise visits to the jails in which thousands of innocent people are being illegally detained. Qazi Khalid MPA [member of provincial assembly], Sindh Assembly also demanded that MQM members should be brought to the courts of law.

Pakistan: Editorial Welcomes International Drug Control Meeting

BK0905095896 Karachi DAWN in English 8 May 96 p 11

[Editorial: "Cooperation in Drug Control"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The two-day Tashkent meeting on international cooperation in drug control, which concluded earlier this week, focused on the problem of trafficking in Central Asia which has emerged as an important route for heroin and other narcotics sold in Europe and North America. Afghanistan, which has become a major source of heroin in recent years, came in for sharp criticism from the international experts attending the talks. They accused it of being behind the current upswing in trafficking in the region. In this context, the Uzbek President, speaking at the Tashkent meeting, made a pointed reference to the guns-for-drugs trade in the region. Various warring Afghan factions, he said, used drug money to buy weapons. He urged the UN to impose an arms embargo against Afghanistan which, he charged, was using its border with Tajikistan as a transit point for the smuggling of opium and cannabis. Last year, an estimated 1,300 kilograms of drugs were seized and an additional 600 kilograms was recovered during the first three months of the current year, highlighting the growing narcotics menace in Central Asia.

With drug trafficking through the region netting up to $500 billion a year for the operators and their minions, the incentive for the illicit trade can be well imagined. Growing cultivation of poppy in Central Asia itself was a cause for heightened concern. As a producer of drugs and as a conduit for narcotics destined for the international market, Pakistan must coordinate its preventive and control efforts with those of the Central Asian countries. Most of the opium processed into heroin at clandestine factories in the NWFP [Northwest

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Frontier Province] and in the area around the Khyber Pass, comes from Afghanistan which was producing over 1,000 tonnes per year by mid-point of the Afghan war. The Golden Crescent encompassing the mountainous valleys of Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan is one of the biggest sources of opium and heroin. The region's proximity to Central Asia accounts for the mounting concerns over the spread of narcotics. Coordinating efforts to confront the problem was thus one of the major objectives of the five Central Asian states meeting in Tashkent.

Pakistan, despite some recent successes on the drug front still has a long way to go to eliminate the scourge. Cooperation of the tribal elders needs to be enlisted as was done during the recent operation in Jamrud. However, since no country can fight the drug problem single-handed, as was evident from the parleys at Tashkent, increased contacts with regional states for intensifying cooperation in drug control should form a key part of Pakistan's endeavors to evolve a concerted strategy to combat the narcotics menace.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Minister Favors Extension of State of Emergency

BK0805124496 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 8 May 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] has attacked the security forces in Northern Province killing one soldier and losing two of their own men in a separate clash. The Defense Ministry said yesterday that the Tigers infiltrated the town of Kodikamam in the Jaffna peninsula. They opened fire on troops setting up a new bunker line. At least one soldier died and two others were wounded in the attack. Two Tigers were also shot dead after a confrontation with the Navy at Vettilaikerny in the Jaffna peninsula yesterday. In the east, the terrorists blasted two high tension power pylons and an electricity transformer in Trincomalee. The Tigers have stepped up attacks against security forces and sabotage of public utilities in the Eastern Province following a series of military setbacks in the Jaffna area. Officials said that the security forces are consolidating their position in the areas of the peninsula which were recently captured from the Tigers. The terrorists have staged sporadic attacks against the military in the region, but more civilians are crossing LTTE lines to return to their homes in areas liberated by the troops. Nearly 250,000 civilians have already done so.

A motion to extend the state of emergency by another month was taken up for debate in parliament when it resumed sitting this morning. Deputy Defense Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte said that the government is able to defeat the LTTE politically as well as militarily. He revealed that over 200,000 Jaffna civilians who were under the control of the LTTE have now returned to their homes in areas liberated by the government troops. He said after the takeover of the Kilali lagoon area, the LTTE terrorists have no access to the mainland. General Ratwatte said that the welfare of the people in the liberated areas is now being looked into and that they were being provided with essential supplies and services. The LTTE had lost many of their cadres and are now depleted and they are unable to face the operation of Riviresa Two. He said that the government will defeat the murder [as heard] of LTTE and bring home peace in the country. To achieve this the state of emergency should be extended, the deputy minister added.

Sri Lanka: Further on Extending State of Emergency

BK0905075096 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 9 May 96

[Report by Norton Weerasinghe — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Deputy Defence Minister General Anuruddha Ratwatte on Wednesday [8 May] told parliament that the government was currently involved in a massive rehabilitation and reconstruction programme in liberated areas in the North.

Introducing the resolution to extend the state of emergency in all administrative districts in the country for a further period, General Ratwatte said the people in these liberated areas were being provided with all basic necessities for them to live peacefully and comfortably which was something they had been denied for over a decade.

This development signifies two situations. (a) the only group that counted in the armed struggle, has been abandoned by the people of the area. (b) the only group that continue with the call for separation has been repudiated by the people. In other words the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has been beaten both militarily and politically.

They are now in a desperate situation. Earlier after Riviresa I [government military offensive] they found it impossible to face the Sri Lanka forces. They intensified their international media blitz to hoodwink the international community. Now with the people liberated from their clutches, the LTTE cannot continue their propaganda here or abroad.

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In this situation the only weapon in their hand is the murderous inhuman weapon of terrorism. In the absence of any other alternative, they will resort to acts of barbaric terrorism.

Despite all the disruptive activities of the LTTE, the government was working with a firm determination to eradicate terrorism and establish a foundation for lasting peace in the entire country.

The LTTE however continues to engage in other atrocities as would be seen from the statement tabled in parliament by me.

The government therefore, had to proclaim a state of emergency throughout the country in the interests of public security and the preservation of public order and also to enable the law enforcement authorities to maintain law and order in the country since the provisions of the normal law in force are inadequate.

The Deputy Minister also said that Riviresa II launched by the government was not a military offensive in the conventional sense but an operation conducted by the military to rescue the displaced long suffering innocent people from the clutches of LTTE atrocities.

General Ratwatte said he sincerely hoped that all members of the House would extend their unstinted support to the government's political initiatives aimed at ending the protracted ethnic conflict in the country and also to continue the state of emergency in all the administrative districts of the country for a further period.

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